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BYZANTIUM IN THE SEVENTH CENTURY

VOLUME V

JUSTINIAN II
LEONTIUS AND TIBERIUS
685-711

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IN LIEU OF A PROLOGUE*

The political history of the 7th century ends with this volume. The task was overwhelming. Now, when I think of the difficulties encountered and the effort spent in research and in attempts to find a logical solution to the contradictions encountered in the sources (Byzantine, Western, Armenian, Arabian, etc.) I am overcome with awe.

Great difficulties, however, present themselves again in the account of the facts which this last volume attempts. No contemporary Byzantine sources have survived. It has been said that the Patriarch Nicephorus based part of his chronicle on these now extinct sources. According to Suidas,[1] a certain patrician named Trajan flourished during the reign of Justinian Rhinotmetus. This patrician wrote a brief chronicle. It is accepted by all historians today that Nicephorus based his account on this chronicle.[2] Moreover, there is another source, contemporary with the events, which ends with the year 713, but which has been lost and consequently we cannot know its precise contents. It appears that Nicephorus used this source also in his first manuscript (The London Manuscript) which ends with the year 713 as well. In any event, the surviving sources all date from the 9th century and they are so confusing, so full of contradictions and fictions that it is extremely hard, if not impossible, to arrive at any conclusions. For example, Theophanes narrates that Justinian, in order to revenge himself

*For detailed sources and references cited in the footnotes, see the Bibliography.

1. *Suidae Lexicon*, Vol. IV, see 'Trajan'.

2. Krumbacher, Vol. I, p.651 ff. - De Boor, *Der Historiker Traianus*, in *Hermes* 17/1882. — E. Patzig, *Leo Grammaticus und Seinsippe*, in *B.Z.* 3/1894.

upon the people of Cherson, dispatched a great army and his navy with orders to massacre all the inhabitants. The leaders of the army, however, after having killed all the adults, felt pity for the babes and children. When Justinian was informed of this he was mightily angered and dispatched another army and ships to kill the rest. The inhabitants of Cherson did not allow them entrance to their city. Now, one naturally wonders: since all the inhabitants had been slain, who were those who managed to prevent the army from entering the city?

These are some of the difficulties which the scholar encounters when he has to rely on sources which are not even contemporary with the events, or which have been changed by the hand of a copyist. The history of the 7th century has not been studied in its entirety by anyone in especial. There are two monographs (I do not consider the two short dissertations by Spintler and Kaestner as thorough studies), of which the one deals with Heraclius and the other with Justinian II. We possess no studies, however, on the century as a whole as we do for other centuries.

With the fall of Justinian, the dynasty of the Heracleids, which offered so much to Byzantium, comes to an end. What seems curious is that its history began with the revolution of 610 and ended with that of 711. What seems even more curious is that with the end of the dynasty the Byzantine borders were the same as in the beginning of Heraclius' reign, except for the Exarchate of Africa.

This is a strange century, with enormous consequences, since the events which took place during its course continue to play a part in contemporary history. This is the century in which the Persian Empire reached its peak and then declined. A new people, or rather a group of tribes, to whom no one had paid any attention, achieved greatness and in a short time conquered all the Eastern Byzantine provinces, which, only a few years before, had been liberated by Heraclius, and managed, towards the end of this century, to cross the straits of Gibraltar annihilating the Greco-Roman civilization in the whole of northern Africa. Another people, or rather group of tribes, the Slavs, descended and established themselves in the Balkan Peninsula. Hunno-

Mongolic-Turkic tribes[3] known by the name of "Bulgars" conquered part of the Balkan Peninsula and established their first European state — thanks to Constantine IV, who was unwarlike. The Arabs, Slavs and Bulgars still exist today and play a leading role in world affairs. Yet this century, which was of such great importance and had such tremendous consequences, has never attracted the interest of a serious scholar. It is true that the absence of contemporary sources and the unreliability of those in existence would discourage any scholar. Indeed, great effort and continuous research was required for me to come to the end of this work. I would like to believe that I have laid the foundations for the study of this century. Let others, now, try to improve it and discover new evidence that will allow full light to fall upon this century. Then, theories which bear no relation to the sources, or to common logic, may cease to be upheld.

3. Moravcsik, *Byzantinoturcica*, I, 108. — Stratos, *Byzantium in the 7th Century*, Vol. 4, p.94 ff.

CHAPTER I

JUSTINIAN II

When Justinian assumed the throne, the state of the Empire was good and there were possibilities for further development, if the proper measures were adopted.

Peace had finally been concluded with the Arabs. Raids against the Exarchate of Africa had ceased and with the renewal of the peace treaty hostilities in Asia Minor had come to an end. Moreover, the Arabs were not in a position to contemplate war against the Byzantines. The new Caliph Abd al-Malik ibn Marwan was not recognised as such by the greatest part of the Arab Empire. In Arabia, Abdullah ibn Zubayr had been proclaimed Caliph and the whole of Arabia, as well as the Eastern Provinces which the Arabs had conquered, recognised only him. Abd al-Malik was obliged to meet this situation with the army which was under his command and this happened to be the Syrian which, thanks to Muawiyah, was the best trained army in the Arab Empire. Yet other claimants to the throne appeared besides ibn Zubayr, some in the capacity of a Prophet,[4] others as independent princes.[5] It appears that the Mardaites[6] had also began to show unrest. Indeed, the Arab Empire was faced with total chaos.

In the Balkan Peninsula, the newly established Bulgar state lay quiet. It was confronted with many internal problems. The Bulgars were a minority within their own state. Most probably a large percentage of the old Christian population had left the country. The Slavic tribes which had remained needed to be organised and integrated. The tribes which came to constitute

4. Al-Mukhtar in Kufa. Levi della Vida, *Al-Mukhtar*, in *E.I.* 1st Edition. — Theophanes, pp. 360, 363. His revolt took place in the 66th year of the Hegira =685-6. — Tabari, II. pp. 530-752.

5. Al-Shahib and others in the eastern provinces of Persia.

6. See A. Stratos, *Byzantium in the 7th Century*, Vol. IV, 39-44.

the Bulgar state seem never to have forgotten their ancient art of raiding and plundering the neighbouring Byzantine territory, although the official state respected the peace treaty which had been concluded in 681.

The Slavs of Eastern Macedonia continued their incursions thus causing incessant trouble to the Byzantine people.

In Italy, following the peace treaty with the Lombards and the VI Ecumenical Synod which befriended the Western with the Eastern Church, absolute peace reigned.

Briefly, this was the situation in 685.

1

I have already referred to the difficulties encountered in the sources. There are still two more issues in need of elucidation and research. In Volume IV, which dealt with the reign of Constantine IV, father of Justinian, I stated that it was not known whether and when Justinian was proclaimed co-Emperor by his father. To be sure, Theophanes writes[7] that in the year 6173 = 681-2, Constantine "alone" (this "alone" refers to the elimination of his brothers) reigned together with his son Justinian. Many of our contemporary historians accept this view. However, there are some difficulties which prevent us from accepting it. In a letter written by Justinian to Pope John VII and dated February 17, 687, the official year of his reign given is the second.[8] Consequently, he could not have been crowned co-Emperor before 685 as the year of his reign would have been the third or fourth. Besides, quite independently of this fact, no coins have survived bearing the portraits of Constantine and Justinian together[9] though many coins were minted[10] between the years 681-684. If Justinian had been proclaimed co-Emperor, there would have been coins with his portrait next to

7. Theophanes, p.360. — Cedrenus, p.841. — Leo the Grammarian, p.162. Leo adds that he crowned his son co-Emperor.
8. Mansi, XI, pp. 737-8.
9. Grierson, *A Catalogue*, p.512. — Morrisson, *Catalogue*, p.375.
10. Wroth, *Imperial Byzantine*, pp. 315, 321.

his father's as was the custom.[11] But as succession to the throne in Byzantium was not in those days hereditary, it seems to me unlikely that Constantine IV would have risked an election (since the Emperor had to be elected)[12] although he well knew the affection of the people towards his dynasty. On the basis of this argument, I am led to believe that Justinian was crowned co-Emperor shortly before his father's death.

The other issue in need of elucidation is the exact date of Justinian's ascent to the throne. In principle, the first day of a new Emperor's reign is the last day in the life of the previous Emperor. We do not know, however, the exact date of Constantine's death. The *Liber Pontificalis*[13] states that Justinian assumed the throne in early September of the 15th Indiction (685). Most contemporary historians[14] adopt this view which Grumel tried to support by citing a Synaxarium of Constantinople. According to another view, which seems to me plausible, Constantine died on the 10th of July 685.[15] Hence, Justinian must have assumed the throne on the 10th of July of the 14th Indiction (685).

Justinian was then 16-17 years old.[16] It follows that the year of his birth must have been 668-669. Given the fact that his father was born in 650, it is unlikely that he married before 667 or 668.

It is practically impossible to delineate with accuracy the character of this Emperor. So many false impressions and myths were woven around his person that it becomes indeed very hard to see through to the real man. Justinian succeded in arousing

11. As, i.e., Heraclius I with one of his sons, then with both when he appointed the second one as well co-Emperor. Constantine III did the same with his sons and so did Justinian II with his own son.

12. See Vol. I of the present study. — Christophilopoulou, *Election, Coronation*, etc.

13. *L.P.* I, p.366.

14. Ostrogorsky, *A History*, p.129. — Wellhausen, *The Arab Kingdom*, p.428. — Grumel, in *An. Bol*, 84/1966.

15. Halkin, in *Byz.* 24/1954, who proves that the Constantine referred to in the *Synaxarion* is not the IV, but the son of Basil I who died in 879. — *Chronicon Altinate.* — Grierson, *Tombs and Obits.*

16. Nicephorus, p.36. — Theophanes, p.363. — Zonaras, III, p.320.

the hatred of all the chroniclers. It is noteworthy that not only the Byzantine and Eastern chroniclers, but the Westerners as well attack him although he endeavoured to maintain friendly relations with the Church of Rome.

It is true that being so young, Justinian could not have a clear picture of the situation in his Empire, or of the possibilities offered. The chroniclers who take a less biased view of him state that he was thoughtless and weak and that he took childish risks.[17] Others state that he was haughty, brutal, murderous, conceited and that the people generally despised him.[18] The Eastern chroniclers [19] maintain that he killed many people, indeed the best men in Byzantium, and that the people suffered greatly during his rule.

Justinian's actions may help us arrive at some conclusions about his character. It is certain that he was courageous and bold, energetic and gifted. He was pious and lenient towards the Church of Rome although it often acted against him. He was, however, autarchic and stubborn. His inordinate ambition made him want to imitate the magnificent reign of his predecessor Justinian I. He was incapable of chosing good advisors and constantly pressed his officials to levy taxes as he was always in need of money. He was indifferent to the fact that the brutal ways in which these taxes were collected roused the hatred of his people. On many occasions he showed a sound political acumen and a sense of diplomacy. He was, however, brutal and committed many atrocities especially after his return from exile.[20]

In spite of all his errors and the lack of sound judgment, which distinguishes the true politician, Justinian was a ruler capable of

17. Theophanes, p.363. — Cedrenus, p.841. — Andrea Dandulo, *Chronicon*, p.102. — Zonaras, III, 321.

18. Glycas, p.520. — Sathas, *Synopsis*.

19. Michael the Syrian, II, pp. 470, 478. — *Chronicle of the year 1234*, p.231.

20. Ostrogorsky, *op.cit.*, pp. 129,138. — Diehl, *Le Monde Oriental*, p.244. — Bury, *History*, II, 320. — Finlay, *A History*, I, 387. — Bréhier, *Vie et Mort de Byzance*, p.65. — Jenkins, *Byzantium*, p.50. — Hodgkin, *Italy*, VI, 349. — Head, *Justinian II*, p.151. — Amandos, *History*, I, 334. — Lambros, *History*, V, 751. Paparrigopoulos, *History*, 3a, p.256.

understanding the needs of his Empire. As Vasiliev states[21] Justinian's reign has received little if no attention. His measures against the aristocracy may have been dictated by the great resistance which the nobles put up against him, since they were unwilling to accept his despotic policy and wished to dethrone him. It is possible that had Justinian not been dethroned with the years his character might have improved and he might have turned out to be a good ruler. One thing about him is certain, that he inherited a family weakness. As I wrote in Volume I, Heraclius' first wife Eudocia suffered from epilepsy and this caused her early death.[22] This illness left its traces on all the descendants — a hereditary curse which affected their health, their mental balance and their intelligence. Justinian was the last of her line. His great grandfather, Heraclius I, was not altogether normal. He was highly neurotic and this led him to a fear of water and to acts of cruelty, something which bore no relation to his earlier personality.

Constantine Porphyrogennetus[23] in his treatise to his own son Romanos (De Adm. Imp.) writes that Justinian was a Cypriot "something which the old Cypriots maintained and which is held to be so even today". However, there is no evidence to support the view that the family of the Heracleids had genealogical relations with Cyprus. Therefore, Jenkins rightly rejects Constantine's assertion in his scholia on the treatise (p. 181).[24] Yet one wonders on what tradition did Constantine rely since he usually based his writings on the official archives available. Could this have been the place of origin of his mother Anastasia? Or of Justinian's first wife? We know the extraction of Heraclius' first wife and of the wife of his son Gregoria who was the great grandmother of Justinian. We also know the extraction of his second wife. However, we know nothing about the family and

21. Vasiliev, *Histoire*, I, 256.

22. Nicephorus, p.7. — Stratos, Vol. I, p.94,95 and II, pp.178-79.

23. Constantine Porphyrogennetus, *De Adm. Imp.* Ch. 47, pp.9-11, Vol. II which includes scholia on the text, p.181.

24. See also Hill, *History of Cyprus*, I, p.280 and note 5.

the place of origin of his grandmother Fausta or of his mother Anastasia.

It appears that Justinian was interested in alchemy.[25] This interest he had inherited from his great grandfather Heraclius I. As I have already written[26] there exist manuscripts which refer to the writings of Heraclius on alchemy and astrology.[27]

In the St. Mark manuscript, we find in the Index for books on alchemy references (nos. 15 and 16) to Justinian's epistles etc. The writings attributed to Justinian have perished. What survives is to be found in Arab texts, or in the *Turba Philosophorum* which contains a Latin translation of the Arab text.

In another manuscript on alchemy preserved in the Escorial we find the following references: 5. Epistle of Justinian etc.; 6. About the divine art of Justinian; 7. Lecture addressed to the philosophers by the Emperor Justinian. Finally, in another manuscript, the *Codex Vossianus* of Leyden, Holland, under no. 47 Justinian's description of the "philosophical egg"[28] is mentioned.

The Arabs frequently refer to the works of Heraclius and of Justinian on astrology and alchemy.

2

As I wrote in Volume IV (p.11), Justinian had a brother by the name of Heraclius. Absolutely nothing is known about him. We do not know the dates of his birth, or death, or any facts about his life. I suppose he was younger than Justinian because in a letter his name appears below Justinian's and, as we know, Justinian was the heir to the throne. We are informed of his

25. Berthelot, *La Chimie*, III, pp. 2, 3, 98.

26. Stratos, *op.cit.*, Vol. I, 94.

27. Manuscript of the 11th century in the Marcian Library, Venice, on Chemistry, the making of gold, etc. Manuscripts in the Library of Paris, no. 684 "Vrondologion, etc" no.1630 "....of the starry motion". See also Nau in *Didascalie de Jacob*, in *P.O*, Vol. 8.

28. For all this see Berthelot, *Introduction*, p.152 ff, and pp.214-5. *Ibid.*, note 25.

existence because of a letter which his father Constantine wrote to Pope Benedict II (684-685). Together with the letter, the Emperor had sent locks of his children's hair to the Pope. The Pope received the delegate in an official ceremony, as recorded in the *Liber Pontificalis*,[29] in his capacity as head of the clergy and of the army of Rome. The gesture was symbolic and signified that the sons of Constantine were now under the protection of the Pope who, henceforth, was their spiritual father.[30]

It appears that Justinian married twice. Nothing is known about his first marriage and it is by accident that we are informed of it by the chroniclers. When Justinian at the end of 704 or at the beginning of 705 sought refuge in Bulgaria and asked for assistance in order to regain his throne, besides other promises, he offered his daughter as wife to the "Master" of the Bulgars.[31] However, for the daughter to be of marriageable age, she must have been at most 17-19 years old. Therefore, Justinian must have married around 686-7.

The name of his first wife is known to us from the list of imperial graves in the mausoleum of Justinian I in the Church of the Holy Apostles. On the list, we read: "...10. Eudocia, wife of Justinian the younger." As is well known, the wife of Justinian the elder was Theodora and her sarcophagus is cited as being next to the larnax bearing her husband's remains. Another list writes: "...19. Towards the south and to the right another larnax, a rosy hued dokimini, in which rests Eudocia, wife of Justinian."[32] The fact that Eudocia was buried in the Church of the Holy Apostles implies that she must have died before 695 which was the year of Justinian's dethronement.

29. *L.P.* I, 364. — Jaffé-Wattenbach, *Regesta usw*, p.168. — Hodgkin, *Italy*, VI, 348.

30. *L.P.* I, note 5 p.365 by Duchêsne. — Pauli Diaconis, *Historia Langobardorum* IV, 38. Amandos, *History*, I, 333.

31. Nicephorus, pp.41-2. — Theophanes, p.374, for the year 6196 (704-5). — Zonaras, III, 326-7 — Leo the Grammarian, p.168.

32. Constantine Porphyrogennetus, *De Cer.* II, ch. 42. — Codinus, *On the Tombs of the Kings* in *Migne*, P.G. Vol. 157, p.732. — Banduri, *Imperium Orientali*, I, 121-124. — Du Gange, *Familiae*, IV, 109-110. — Grierson, *The Tombs*, 50-51. — Downey, *The Tombs of*, pp. 33, 38, 41, 44, 49.

When Justinian escaped from Cherson, where he had been exiled, and sought asylum from the Khagan of the Khazars, the Khagan offered to him as wife his daughter, or, as some sources state, his sister whom Justinian renamed Theodora. I shall examine this matter in another chapter. Theodora bore to him Tiberius. In 706, she was crowned Empress together with Tiberius who was then one year old.

This is all the information that we possess concerning the family of Justinian II.

CHAPTER II

THE BALKAN PENINSULA

As stated in the previous volumes, since the days of Phocas, Slavic tribes kept penetrating into the Balkan Peninsula and settling in uninhabited areas. Many tribes settled in the mountainous regions either because this ensured them greater freedom, or because they engaged in stock breeding. The various Hunno-Turkic-Mongolian tribes (Avars, Cotrigurs, Onoguri and all those which were subsequently called Bulgars)[33] and even the Slavs, had repeatedly raided the Balkan Peninsula and had ravaged several regions, especially in the northern part of the Peninsula.

At first, most of these tribes led a peaceful life and submitted to the rule of the Byzantine authorities by which they were often subsidised. After 626, when the Avars were eliminated from the Balkan Peninsula, relations between the Slavic and the indigenous tribes became friendly as proved by the incident concerning Perbundus, chieftain of the Rynchiniens. A joint embassy of Greeks and Slavs went to Constantinople to beg the king for his liberation.[34] As mentioned in the Miracula of St. Demetrius, which in spite of errors and omissions is the only source available for events which occurred in the area of Salonica in the seventh century, the Slavs often travelled there on business.

However, among the Slavic tribes, and especially the mountainous ones, there were some which did not easily submit, as they wished to preserve their independence and to elect their own chieftain. After 626 which marked the last siege of Salonica

33. See Vol. IV, p.93 ff.
34. *De Sancti Demetri*, pp.1349-1352. — Tougard, *De l'Histoire Profane*, p.150.

by the Avars and the Slavs[35] and until 650, the Slavs presented no problem to the Byzantine authorities. No source refers to difficulties arising between the Slavs and the Byzantines. It appears that after 650 some tribes began to raid the countryside thus causing trouble to the local people. Incursions and plundering were creating a dangerous situation.[36] In 658, Constantine III (Constans) was obliged to march against the Sclavinians who had settled in the regions around Rhodope and the river Strymon.[37] The campaign did not aim at ousting the tribes, since the land would then be deserted and this was not consistent with Byzantine colonising policy, but at subjugating them and ensuring the freedom and safety of the main routes.

Around 670, because of the incident with Perbundus, the Rynchiniens and the Strymonites in agreement with the other Slavic tribes, took advantage of the fact that Constantinople was under siege and attacked Salonica. The venture failed and it was then that raids and plundering assumed grave proportions. When the Arabian affair was settled, Constantine IV, around 678-679, ordered his army to march through Thrace and attack the Slavs. Though they resisted vigorously, the Slavs finally suffered an overwhelming defeat.[38]

The situation in the Province of Thrace improved when the peace treaty was signed with the Bulgars in 681, although some Bulgar and Slavic tribes continued to pillage the mountainous regions between Macedonia and Thrace.

This was in brief the situation in the Balkan Peninsula when Justinian assumed the throne.

35. See Vol. I of the present study, Chapters VIII and XXII. — Barisic, in his study *Les Miracles de St. Demetrius* maintains that this last attack occurred in 618. As I have already written in Vol I, p.372, this opinion is not correct.

36. Amandos, *Slavs and Slavophones.* — Kyriakides, *Byzantine Studies.* — Tafrali, *Thessalonique etc.*

37. Lemerle, *Invasions.* — Kulakovski, *Byzantine History,* Vol.3. — Kyriakides, *op.cit.*

38. *Books of Miracles* in *Migne* P.G. Vol. 116, p.1358 ff.

According to Theophanes, during the year 6179=687 Justinian ordered his cavalry to proceed to Thrace as he desired "to capture the Bulgars and the Sclavinians".[39] According to Nicephorus, Justinian dissolved the treaty with the Bulgars and then "he instantly attacked the Sclavinians."[40] Zonaras and Leo the Grammarian write that Justinian marched against the western regions.[41]

Again, Theophanes reports that in the following year, 6180=688,[42] i.e., third year of Justinian's reign, "Justinian undertook a campaign against Sclavinia and Bulgaria...". Before we examine this campaign we should devote some attention to the relevant dates since several historians disagree as to the exact year in which it occurred. Some hold that it was in 687,[43] others in 688,[44] still others in 689.[45] We do, however, possess evidence that in 688 Justinian was in Salonica.

Another question that needs to be examined is how could Justinian order his army to march from Asia Minor to Thrace before having secured a peace treaty with the Arabs? Although the treaty which had been concluded with Muawiyah and had been renewed by his son Yazid was theoretically still effective, in

39. Theophanes, p.364. — Cedrenus, p.844, for Justinian's 2nd year.

40. Nicephorus, p.36

41. Zonaras, III, 321. — Leo the Grammarian p.163. — Eliae Bar Sinaya dates this expedition in the year 999=688

42. The years which Theophanes gives for this period should be increased by one year. Irrespective of this, Byzantine chronology does not coincide with the contemporary one.

43. Paparrigopoulos, III, 257. See also *Chronicle of the year 1234*, which mentions the year 997=686

44. Ostrogorksy, *op.cit*, p.130. Following Theophanes, Ostrogorsky writes that he transported his army in 687-688 and that he started in 688-9. Lambros shares this view, V, 753. — Kyriakides, *op.cit.*, IV, 136. — Lemerle, *op.cit.*, for the year 688-9. — Tafrali, *Thessalonique*, p.137. — Rambaud, *L'Empire Grec*, pp.266-7. — Vasiliev, *L'Entree Triomhale* pp.358-9. — Breckenridge, *The Numismatic*, p.10. — Gregoire, *Un Edit*, etc.

45. Levtchenko, *Byzance*, p.129. — Obolensky, *The Byzantine Commonwealth*, p.59, for the years 688-689.

fact it was being constantly violated and this forced the Byzantines to intervene and attack several cities in Syria during 683-684.[46] According to Theophanes, in 6178=686-7, the Byzantines, under the leadership of Leontius, invaded Armenia which was then under the Arab yoke.[47] Moreover, clashes between the Byzantines and the Arabs had begun in Africa. The question which concerns us is the exact date on which the conclusive peace treaty was signed. Theophanes supposedly provides the answer. He writes that in the first year of Justinian's reign, 685-686, that is, third of Abd al-Malik, 687-688 "the peace treaty was concluded". Which of the two dates given is right? In contrast, the Arabs[48] maintain that it was concluded in the 69th year of the Hegira, i.e., in 688-689. Relations between the Byzantines and the Arabs shall be examined in greater detail in the following chapter. As I mentioned above, it is certain that in September 688 Justinian was in Salonica as he issued an edict donating a salt mine to the Church of Saint Demetrius.[49] The edict bears as the date of concession the month of September of the current second Indiction = 688.

The question as to whether the donation concerned a salt mine or a salt warehouse was raised because of a sentence specifying that it was "located near the city of Salonica..." Vasiliev maintains that this implies that the mine was near the church, whereas Gregoire and Kyriakides hold that it must have been near the city and place it at the mouth of the Gallikos river. I believe that the donation concerned a salt mine which must have been located very near the city. The problem lies elsewhere. The edict was issued in 688 and reads: "coming into possession of the said mine in the month of September, etc".

46. See Vol. IV, p.51 ff.

47. Theophanes, p.363. — Zonaras, III, 321. — Acoghig de Daron, French ed., p.129, German ed., pp.71-72. — Ghevond, pp.16-7. — Baladhuri, p.289.

48. See Caetani, *Chronographia Islamica*, p.811, where also the relevant bibliography.

49. Vasiliev, *An Edict of the Emperor*. — Gregoire, *Un Edit de l'Empereur*. — Kyriakides, Review of Vasiliev's study. The question, however, was raised as to whether Justinian donated a salt mine or a warehouse for salt. Vasiliev agrees with the second version whereas the others, following the text, agree with the first version.

Therefore, the date of September 688 refers to the moment upon which the salt mine would come into the possession of the church. The edict could, then, have been issued earlier or even later than this date.

There are various other matters in need of clarification which, however, I shall examine when I come to an exposition of the facts.

Justinian left Constantinople in 688. The internal situation in the Arab Empire was such that it presented no threat to Byzantium, even though a peace treaty had not been formally concluded. It is to be supposed that besides the cavalry, Justinian must have ordered the army of the "theme" of Thrace to join the campaign, as cavalry alone would prove useless in the mountainous region.

Justinian undertook this campaign because he wished to curtail the pressure exerted by the Slavic tribes on the local people. Besides, raids and pillage created great obstacles to communications on the main routes. It is probable that some Slavs (Sclaviniae) had asserted their independence and Justinian wished to bring them again under Byzantine rule. It appears that one of his main objectives was to ensure control over the passes of Rhodope and the Strymon.[50]

According to Theophanes, Justinian succeeded in repulsing the Bulgars which he encountered during his march. The question is whether indeed he met with Bulgars, or with Bulgar-Slavic bandit tribes. Although Nicephorus writes that Justinian had dissolved the peace threaty with the Bulgars, we find no other reference to the Bulgars in his writings, or in the writings of the other chroniclers, Zonaras, George the Monk, etc. The Slavs were annihilated and Justinian entered Salonica "with hordes of captives, Slavs who had been captured during the battle, or had surrendered after their defeat."[51] It appears that Justinian was successful in subjecting the "Sclaviniae" and in thining them out.

50. Dvornik, *La Vie de St. Gregoire le Dacapolite*, p.32. — Kyriakides, *op.cit.*, p.136. — Tafrali, *op.cit.*, p.137. — Obolensky, *op.cit.*

51. George the Monk, p.729. — Zonaras, III, 321. — Nicephorus, p.36.

The great fire of Salonica revealed a fresco of the 7th or 8th century in the Church of Saint Demetrius depicting an Emperor entering the city in triumph. Vasiliev holds that it undoubtedly represents Justinian's entry into Salonica, and confirms this view in a special study.[52] I do not know what led some of our modern historians to consider this entry into Salonica as a great victory of the Byzantines. It has been maintained that Justinian's entry into the city was triumphal.

Justinian stayed for a short time in Salonica and shipped the captives by boat to Abysos in order to colonise the Province of Bythinia ("in the region of Opsikion").[53] The number of these captives remains unknown. Lamarski brings it up to 80,000, but Vasiliev finds this somewhat exaggerated.[54] Kyriakides, on the other hand, maintains that the number must have been approximately 150,000.[55] Uspenski raises it to 250,000 which certainly is excessive. One wonders how many ships were required to transport all this multitude.

We do not know by what route Justinian arrived at Salonica. However, as there is no disagreement about the aim of this campaign, which was to restore order in the mountainous settlements of the Sclaviniae, we have to agree with Kyriakides that he marched through the mountainous passes of Rhodope and arrived at Salonica through the valley of Tiberioupolis (Stromnitsa) and of the river Axios. Theophanes refers to "the pass of Kleisura" in his account of the return journey so we gather that Justinian must have followed the same route back.

It was either on his way to Salonica or on his return journey that Justinian founded the "kleisura" of Strymon which would enable the Byzantines to survey the mountainous region lying between the passes of Roupel and of Nestos. The creation of this

52. Vasiliev, *L'Entree Triomphale.* — *Ibid., The Mosaic of Sassaferrata,* in *D.O.P.* 5/1950. — Kyriakides, in *Makedonica,* II/1953. — A. Xyngopoulos doesn't share this view, *Contribution to the Topography of Byzantine Salonica,* Salonica, 1949.

53. Nicephorus, p.36. — Theophanes, p.364.

54. V. Lamanski, *The Slavs in Asia Minor* (in Russian), Petrograd, 1959. See Charanis, *The Slavic Element in Byzantine Asia Minor,* in *Byz,* 18/1946-48.

55. Kyriakides, in *Makedonica* II, 1953 p.756 ff.

stronghold aimed at preventing the Bulgars, or the Bulgar-Slavic tribes, from advancing south. According to Constantine Porphyrogennetus Justinian manned it with "Scyths". Modern historians, however, maintain that these were "Slavs" who were subject to the Byzantines and at the head of which Justinian appointed Byzantine officers. The chief officer (Kleisourarch) was accountable to the general of the "theme" of Thrace. Subsequently, the "kleisura" itself became a "theme",[56] aiming to prevent incursions by the northern tribes, to insure peace and order in the surrounding regions and free communications on the main routes.

2

Both Nicephorus and Theophanes write that before undertaking the campaign against the Sclavinians, Justinian dissolved the peace treaty which his father Constantine IV had concluded with the Bulgars.[57] The causes which led to this decision are obscure. It has been maintained[58] on the basis of some information which is found only in Zonaras that Justinian was loath to continue paying the peace tax to the Bulgars. Theophanes writes that while marching against the Slavs Justininan met with the Bulgars and repulsed them. However, the question is posed as to where did this encounter take place since the border with Bulgaria was in those days at Hemus. In no source do we find evidence that the Byzantines on this campaign penetrated into Bulgar territory. It is quite likely that this information refers to an encounter with Bulgar-Slavic tribes

56. Constantine Porphyrogennetus, *De Them.*, No.5., and comments of Pertusi. — Lemerle, *Philippes*, p.125 ff. — Kyriakides, *Byzantine Studies*, p.132 ff. — *Ibid.*, Reviews on Lemerle, Vasiliev, etc., p.702, 751 ff. The Byzantines used to call "Scythians" the Huns and, in general, all the Tataro Mongol-Turkish tribes which, subsequently, assumed the name "Bulgars". Hence, it is possible that some Bulgar tribes may have decided to become subjects of the Byzantines and together with the Slavs formed the population of the "Klyssoura of the Strymon".

57. Nicephorus, p.36. — Theophanes, p.364. — Zonaras III, 321. — Stratos, IV, 112.

58. Bury, *op.cit*, II, 336. — Runciman, *A History*, p.30.

whom Justinian repulsed all the way to the Hemus border, and not to the official army of the Bulgar kingdom. No mention is made about the Bulgars in Nicephorus. As Koulakovski rightly observes, Justinian's diplomatic policy aimed at preserving friendly relations with the Bulgars who, at a later stage, came to his assistance. Besides Theophanes and Cedrenus, who usually copies Theophanes, no other chronicler supplies this information. Yet, many of our contemporary historians[59] maintain that Justinian first repulsed the Bulgars and then marched against the Sclavinians whom he overwhelmed and brought as captives into Salonica, etc.

Another passage from Theophanes gives rise to added difficulties. He writes that on the return journey, "Justinian was ambushed by the Bulgars at Kleisura[60] where many people were wounded and massacred and Justinian himself just managed to escape." The only sources which cite this information are Cedrenus, who as was mentioned before copies Theophanes, and Anastasius the Librarian who translated Theophanes into Latin. This event seems very strange and rightly Koulakovski views it with doubt, though other contemporary historians consider it as true.[61] The question, however, is what route did Justinian follow on his return journey. If he took the Egnatian way, the only passes encountered would have been those of Rentina and Sappae (country of Rhodope). However, neither of these two passes are appropriate for an ambush that would prove

59. Ostrogorsky, *op.cit.* p.130. — Bury, *op.cit.* II, 336. — Cancova-Petkova, *Bulgarians* — It is strange enough how Runciman, *op.cit.*, without relying on any source writes that Justinian invaded Bulgar territory.

60. According to *Suidae Lexicon*, Vol. III, p.131 "thus are called the strongholds of the passes by those whose mother tongue is the Roman". I would like to note that the word "Klyssoura" is not Latin but Greek (see Dimitrakos, *Lexicon*, Vol. 5, p.3932). Hence, "Roman" obviously means the Greek language which was also the language of *Suidae Lexicon*.

61. Bury, *op.cit.*, II, 336. — Diehl, *op.cit.*, p.244, without, however, committing himself. — Brooks, *op.cit.*, II, 406. — Lemerle, *Philippes*, p.125. — Ibid., *Invasions*. — Cancova-Petcova, *op.cit.*, and others. Cancova-Petcova maintains that the ambush was layed between Cavalla and the mouth of the river Nestos. However, in this region we do not meet with dangerous long passes.

so fatal to an experienced and victorious army like that of Justinian.[62] Moreover, this region lies far from Hemus, which marked the Bulgar border. Now, if the Bulgars had penetrated all this way, is it possible for such an event to have escaped the notice of the Byzantine authorities?

The only passes appropriate for an ambush are those of Rupel and Strymon[63] and, further to the north, that of Kresna. We do not know, however, how far north Justinian had advanced. I disagree with Runciman[64] who states that Justinian had penetrated into Bulgar territory and was ambushed there. Justinian may have dissolved the peace treaty with the Bulgars but this, however, does not imply that he invaded their kingdom. For, had Justinian undertaken a war against the official Bulgar state, it is doubtful that he would have sought refuge and assistance there when he lost his throne and wished to regain it. Bulgarian scholars have supported the view that the Bulgars mentioned by Theophanes were those of the Kingdom of Kouver.[65] Kouver is only mentioned in the 5th chapter of the 2nd book of Saint Demetrius' *Miracula.*[66] As I have already stated[67] this is a religious source and we cannot rely on its factual content since its main objective is to prove that it was thanks to the miracles of Saint Demetrius that the city was saved. In any event, if we are to rely solely on these sources, on the basis of what we read we should deduce that the people of Kouver originally settled in the Greek towns of Thrace, which had been the place of origin of their ancestors. Those who survived went to Salonica where they boarded the ships which the Emperor had sent to transport them to Constantinople. Only a very small number of non-Christians continued to live in the Keramesion valley, and

62. Kyriakides, in *Makedonica*, II ff. — Wrongly Beševliev insists that the ambush was layed in the pass of Rendina, between Thessaloniki and Cavalla.

63. Lemerle, in his *Invasions*, supports the view that the ambush layed by the Bulgars was at the pass of Strymon.

64. Runciman, *op.cit.*, p.30

65. Zlatarski, *History*, I. 1. 160-1 (in Bulgarian).

66. *Miracula of St. Demetrius*, in *Migne, P.G.* Vol. 116, p.1174 ff. — Tougard, *De l'Histoire Profane*, p.186 ff.

67. Stratos, *op.cit.*, Vol. IV, p.68 ff.

these were eventually assimilated by the local Greek and Slavic peoples. We have no information whatsoever on the fate of Kouver.[68] No source, secular or religious, refers to him. Therefore, we cannot seriously consider hypotheses which are not founded on some reliable evidence.

It is my opinion that once Justinian had sent the captive Slavs by sea to Abydos, he started on his return journey by following the route which led through the passes of Strymon. This gave him the opportunity to survey the entire northern part of Macedonia (we must not forget that in those days Sardiki, that is, Sofia, was Byzantine territory). Finally, he crossed the valley of Serres which led to the Egnatian way and this he followed to return to Constantinople.[69] According to Lemerle, it was on this return journey that he founded the "kleisura" of Strymon. I am in absolute agreement with Kulakovski's view that if truly Justinian was ambushed (as I have already stated this is not confirmed by any other source) this was not at the initiave of the official Bulgar state, but of Bulgar-Slavic bands and the place of ambush was in all probability the pass of Kresna.

68. Charanis, Kouver etc.
69. Kyriakides, *op.cit.*

CHAPTER III

CONFRONTATION WITH THE ARABS

The issues concerning the war between the Byzantines and the Arabs are very difficult to clarify. Theophanes confused the facts to such an extent that it is almost impossible to arrive at some conclusions. The fabulating imagination of the Arab chroniclers does not make matters easier. Above all, questions of chronology seem impossible to resolve given the present condition of the sources. Of necessity, a contemporary historian has to rely somehow on one of these chroniclers and accordingly fashion his views. Under these circumstances, the task of examining the relations between the Byzantines and the Arabs, when Justinian assumed the throne, becomes very complicated.

1

As stated in the previous volume, though a peace treaty had been signed between Muawiyah and Constantine IV, the terms of the treaty were being constantly violated by the Arabs and this drove the Byzantines to invade Arab territory.[70]

Theophanes writes that in the year 6176=March 684 - March 685, 16th year of Constantine's reign (683-4), first year of Abimeleh (685) and first year of Patriarch Theodore (686-7), "because of the Mardaite invasion there was plague and famine in Syria and Abimeleh..." sent and asked that the peace treaty which had been agreed upon in the days of "Muawiyah" be renewed.

I should like to draw attention to the following: 1. During this year, the Caliph of Damascus was Marwan ben al-Hakam. His son, Abd al-Malik, was proclaimed Caliph on the 27th Ramadan

70. Stratos, *op.cit.*, Vol. IV, pp.51-53.

of the 65th year of the Hegira = 7 May 685.[71] Hence, either the year of Creation is wrong, or the year of Constantine's reign. However, I fear that both dates are erroneous.[72] 2. Theodore became again Patriarch of Constantinople in 686.[73] There are of course other chroniclers whose accounts agree with that of Theophanes[74] who further continues that in the year of Creation 6178 = 686, 1st year of Justinian's reign, 3rd year of Abimeleh's and 3rd of the Patriarch Theodore, Abimeleh dispatched an embassy to Justinian for a reconfirmation of the peace treaty. Yet, here too the dates are contradictory because the first year of Justinian = 685-686, the 3rd of Abd al-Malik the 67th of the Hegira = July 687-688. Only the date for Patriarch Theodore is correct.

The Arab chroniclers give entirely different dates. They maintain that the peace treaty with Justinian was signed in the 69th year of the Hegira = 688-689.[75] The Syrians hold that it was in the year 997 = 685-6;[76] various contemporary historians

71. Zambaur, *Manuel*, p.184. — Gibb, in *E.I*, new edition I.78. There is some disagreement among the Arab chroniclers as far as the year is concerned; however, the majority of them agree on the 65th year of the Hegira.

72. Agapius dates the plague (p.237/497) in the same year, whereas Dennys Tell Mahre, (p.10) in the year 1016 = 704-5. — Cedrenus (p.844) dates these events in the reign of Justinian. Nicephorus writes (p.36) that Justinian "resolved the peace treaty which had been concluded by his father."

73. Grumel, *La Chronologie.— Ibid., Actes*, p.126.

74. Leo the Grammarian, p.162. — Eliae Nisibensis, p.72. — Paul the Deacon, VI. 11. This leads to the conclusion that the treaty was agreed upon by Constantine IV and Abd al-Malik, hence between May and July 685 which is rather impossible. What seems strange is that though Theophanes writes that the terms of the treaty were those as agreed with Muawiyah, all other chroniclers and Theophanes himself report as terms of the treaty those imposed by Justinian.

75. See the relevant bibliography in Caetani, *Chronographia*, p.811.

76. *Chronicle of the year 1234*, p.227. — Michael the Syrian, II, 469. — Agapius, pp.237/497 — Bar Hebraeus, p.103. — Eutychius agrees with this date and from the Arab chroniclers Macoudi, V.206. Maqdisi, Huwa razmi in *Baethgen* for the year 65, as well as Suyuti, p.215-17.

agree either with the date 685[77] or 686[78] or 688 - 689.[79] Finally, the hypothesis has been advanced that there was more than one peace treaty. Brooks, Wellhausen and Cheira,[80] who rely mainly on the Arab chroniclers,[81] hold that it was the year 69-70. It should be noted that the year of Creation 6179=687-8 coincides with the summer of the 69th year of the Hegira=July 688 - June 689.

This is the information contained in the sources and the conclusions arrived at by the best historians. However, we cannot but still wonder about the precise date of the signing of the treaty. We are fortunate in that certain incidents which occurred provide us with some clues. We know from the Arab sources that in the year 685 the Byzantines conquered Mopsuesta and Germanicea and reached Melitene.[82] The Mardaites had attacked Lebanon and Abd al-Malik was faced with great difficulties because Abdallah ben Zubayr had also been proclaimed Caliph at Medina and was considered by a great part of the Arab Empire as the true Caliph. It is for this reason that many Arab chroniclers maintain that al-Malik was recognised as the legitimate Caliph only after the death of Zubayr, that is, in the 73rd year of the Hegira=692-3. Following Theophanes again, we are informed that in the same year, 685-6, Justinian sent his general Leontius to Armenia where he exterminated all the Saracens. As I wrote in the preceding chapter, in 687 Justinian ordered his cavalry to ride to Salonica, and in 688 he himself at the head of an army marched

77. Amandos, *op.cit.*, I, 333-4, etc.

78. Bury, *op.cit.*, II, 406. — Finlay, *op.cit.*, I, 387. — Lambros, V, 751. — Wellhausen etc. Others, like Ostrogorsky, *op.cit.*, pp.129-130, Vasiliev, *Un Edit*, p.7 — Diehl, *Le Monde Oriental*, p.224, maintain that the treaty was concluded before 687 or 688.

79. Brooks, in *C.M.H.* II, 406. — Jenkins, *Cyprus, etc.* — Hatzipsaltis, *Cyprus*, etc.

80. Brooks, *The Arabs.* — Wellhausen, p.428. — Chéira, *La Lutte*, p.147 ff. — Dölger, *Regesten* in no. 253 agrees with the dating 685-6, while in no. 257 with the year 69.

81. Tabari, II.795.16, — Baladhuri, Goeje edition, pp.160 and 188.

82. Baladhuri, p.188. — Ibn Al-Athir, p.117 and 185-188. — Huwarasmi, *op.cit.*

against the "Sclaviniae". From an Edict we deduce that in 688 Justinian was in Salonica. According to Arab chroniclers, al-Malik appointed Zuhayr ben Kais as governor of "Ifrikya" and sent him to recapture Kairouan. We are also informed that during a battle which took place in the 67th year = 686-7 (others maintain that it was in the 64th year = 683-4, while others in the 69th = 688-9) he overwhelmed the Berbers and the Byzantines. Moreover, it is said that the Byzantines took advantage of the absence of Zuhayr and landed at Barca in Lybia (ancient Ptolemais) which they devastated and carried away many prisoners of war. Zuhayr left Africa, hastened to Barca, but was killed there in battle.[83] These are the available facts, on the basis of which an answer may be given as to the year in which the peace treaty was signed.

It is reasonable to argue that if, as Theophanes maintains, the peace treaty had been signed in 685, or, as Cedrenus writes, during the 1st year of Justinian's reign = 685-6, there would have been no reason for Justinian to send his army to Armenia, to kill the Arabs and to set the Mardaites to attack the Arabs in the Lebanon area. Moreover, the Arabs would not have dispatched an army to recapture Africa, neither would the Byzantines have landed in Barca to plunder the city and fight the Arabs. What is more, it doesn't seem reasonable that in 688 Justinian would have sent his army to Thrace and he himself follow it to Salonica.[84] On the basis of the above, we may deduce that the peace treaty was signed before Justinian's departure for Salonica, or that negotiations had begun during 687. The only logical conclusion[85] seems to be that Abd al-Malik, who was under strong pressure because of the internal situation, the constant threat of the Byzantine army and the incursions of the Mardaites, asked Constantine IV, or Justinian, for a renewal of

83. En- Noweiri, Slane edition. — Al Hakam, Gateau ed., I, 259-260. Ibn-Khaldoun, *Hist. Berberes*, I, 213 ff. — Kairouani, p.50. — Adhari, p.22.— Ubayd Allah, pp.39-40. — Al-Maliki, pp.141-142. See also Talbi, under Hassan ben Numan, in *E.I.* n.ed. III, 278.

84. Ostrogorsky, *op.cit.*, pp.129-130, rightly maintains that the peace treaty with the Arabs enabled Justinian to transport his army.

85. Lambros, *op.cit.*, V, 751.

the treaty on the terms agreed upon by Muawiyah.[86]

Now, the peace treaty was not renewed either because al-Malik's request received no answer, or because the Byzantines had wearied over the fact that the Arabs were constantly violating the terms and exacting more. The Byzantines entered Armenia, thus exerting more pressure on the Arabs with the help of the Mardaites. Finally, al-Malik, who had also suffered several defeats in his confrontations with the anti-Caliph, was forced to accept the terms. Obviously, negotiations must have started in 687 and when it appeared that a peace treaty would be realised, Justinian ordered his cavalry to cross over to Thrace and sent his Magister[87] Paul to sign the treaty. As Theophanes writes: "to secure what had been agreed upon by a written guarantee before witnesses."[88]

The terms were rather heavy for the Arabs: they were obliged to pay 1,000 gold coins, one horse and one "slave" per day. The taxes collected in Cyprus, Armenia and Iberia (today Georgia) had to be divided equally between the Arabs and the Byzantines. It has been maintained that Abd al-Malik recognised the suzerainity of the Byzantines over all or part of Armenia. It was unfortunate for the Byzantines that Justinian agreed to withdraw the Mardaites from Lebanon.

I have written at length about the Mardaites in Volume IV (pp. 39-45). Originally, they were the mountainous inhabitants of Amanus whom the Arabs called "Djaradjima".[89] They had been reinforced with Greek officers and soldiers and together with the liberated captives, or Christian slaves, composed the guerilla bands which were active in the Lebanon area. It appears that it was these guerilla bands that Justinian agreed to

86. As Theophanes writes, although the terms which he mentions are entirely different from those we find in the treaty with Muawiyah.

87. The Magisters were subject to the Magister of the Officii and were used on diplomatic missions and negotiations. During Justinian's reign their name began to change to that of "the king's men". See C. Porphyrogennetus, *De Cer.* I, Ch. 1.

88. Theophanes, p.363.

89. Canard, in *E.L.*, new edition, II, 468-469.

withdraw[90] and not all the population for after several years, in the 89th year of the Hegira = 708, Maslamah ibn al-Malik conquered the capital of the "Djaradjima" region and removed all the ancient inhabitants whom he then dispersed in Syria.[91] Therefore, the Mardaites remained at least till 708 on their mountains and only a few of them, together with the bands formed by the Byzantines in the Lebanon area, were removed when the treaty was signed. It was agreed that the peace treaty would be effective for 10 years.

The disbanding and removal of the Mardaites was a great error on Justinian's part and Byzantium suffered dire consequences.[92] Justinian transported 12,000 Mardaites, the Byzantine guerilla bands and part of the inhabitants of the mountainous areas. He settled the main group of them in Attaleia and in the region where, at a later date, the "theme" of the Cibyrrhaeots was founded on the northern shores of Asia Minor.[93] The remaining were settled in Mani[94] (Peloponnese) and in Nicopolis (Epirus). The transportation probably took place in the 69th year of the Hegira and it is perhaps for this reason that the Arab chroniclers date the signing of the treaty in this year.

2

When Armenia came under Arab rule, the Caliph appointed as ruler a prince and a Muslim governor who resided in the capital at Dovin. Muawiyah appointed as ruler of Armenia

90. Nicephorus, p.36 "he also transported the soldiers which were stationed on the mount of Lebanon." — Zonaras, III, 321. — Michael the Syrian, II, 469. — *Chronicle of the year 1234*, p.227.

91. Baladhuri, Hitti ed., p.249. — See also Matti Mosa, *The Relations*. — Wellhausen, *op.cit.* p.428.

92. Theophanes, p.363 "having mutilated the Roman dynasty" and p.364 "having demolished the bronze wall". — Zonaras, III, 321. — Leo the Grammarian, p.162.

93. Honigmann, *Die Ostgrenze usw.*, p.41.

94. Rambaud, *L'Empire*, p.240.

Gregory Mamikonian who held this post for many years.[95] In the meantime, great trouble broke out in Armenia which lasted for over two years.[96] The invasion of the Khazars, who devastated several regions of Armenia, of Iberia (Georgia) and of Albania (south of the Caucasus) aggravated the situation. Gregory Mamikonian fought to stop their advance but perished in battle.[97]

In 686, the Arabs appointed Ashot Bagratouni. Justinian, wishing to take advantage of the internal unrest facing the Arabs, ordered Leontius, general of the Anatolikon theme,[98] to invade Armenia with his powerful army. The Byzantines exterminated all the Arabs and conquered Armenia.[99] According to the Armenian sources, Leontius treated Armenia as an enemy country.[100] He pillaged and devastated 25 of the country's regions and took as hostages 8,000 families who were then obliged to buy their freedom. From Ararat he proceeded to Iberia and to Albania plundering and devastating the land, until he arrived at the Caspian sea. Leontius sent the greatest share of the spoil to Justinian. The Arabs, who commanded a meagre army, tried to reconquer Armenia and invaded from the northeastern part, with the excuse that they were trying to oust the Byzantines. They were repulsed by the Armenians. Prince Ashot was mortally wounded in battle.

In brief, this is what was happening in Armenia, but the question remains as to when did it all happen. There is great disagreement over this question because of the contradictory dates which are given in the sources. We are informed, for example, that Leontius' invasion occurred in 686-7, 2nd year of

95. *De Rebus Armeniae*, Garitte ed., p.439. —Marqwart, *Streifzüge*, p.514. — Grousset, *Armenie*, p.305.

96. Denys de Tell. — Mahre Filler, *Questiones Leontii.*

97. Acoghig de Daron, French ed., pp.128-9., German ed., p.71 ff, for the year 684. — Kirakos de Gantzac, p.33. — John Catholicus, p.81, for the year 685.

98. Theophanes, p.363 in connection with pp.368.18-19. In other words, he was a patrician and governor of the theme.

99. Theophanes, p.363. — Zonaras, III, 321. — Filler, *op.cit.*, pp.23-4. — Baladhuri, Hitti ed.

100. Acoghig de Daron, German ed. pp.71-2. — Kirakos de Gantzac, p.16.

Justinian's reign.[101] In other sources, the 3rd or the 4th year of his reign are given as the correct date,[102] i.e., 687-8 and 689-9. However, we cannot help but wonder how could all this have happened after 688 since, as some chroniclers maintain,[103] the peace treaty with the Arabs already had been signed. If this was the case, would the Byzantines continue to massacre the Arab garrisons and would the Arabs continue to pay such a heavy peace tax when obvious violations of the terms occurred? And this in spite of the fact that internal or other matters may have required their immediate attention? After all, we know for a fact that they too invaded Armenia in order to oust the Byzantines.[104] Should we then deduce that the Byzantines were planning to have a war with the Arabs? These hypotheses do not seem logical. What seems to me a reasonable order of the events is that the peace treaty was concluded after the Byzantine invasion of Armenia. If a war was pending with the Arabs, it seems unreasonable that Justinian would have sent his cavalry to Thrace and that he himself would have undertaken a campaign in the Balkan Peninsula.

101. Theophanes, p.369 for the year 6178 = 686-7. — Filler, *op.cit.*, p.22. — Dulaurier, *Recherches* p.235. — Müller, *Der Islam*, p.376. — Saint-Martin, *Memoires*, p.338. — Laurent, *L'Armenie*, p.303.

102. Acoghig de Daron, French ed. 129-130, German ed. 72. He maintains that Justinian himself entered Armenia at the head of his army. — Diehl, *op.cit.*, p.244, for the year 689. — Brooks, *op.cit.*, II, 406. — Grousset, *Histoire*, p.307.

103. Brooks, *op.cit.*, II, 406. — Bury, *op.cit.*, II, 321.

104. Head, in *Justinian II*, p.33, note 4, writes that according to Theophanes (p.363) the Arabs in reprisal occupied two powerful Byzantine cities. She refers also to Ghevond who, however, does not mention anything relevant. Theophanes writes that Abimeleh "occupied Circessium and Theopolis" but neither of the two cities were Byzantine. Circessium, today El-Bouzera, is a city of Mesopotamia on the river Euphrates and was occupied by the Arabs in 639-640. Theopolis is Antioch of Syria. It is possible that it was occupied by Mukhtar and for this reason Abd-al-Malik invaded Mesopotamia. It is possible that "Theopolis" is also wrong. In my opinion, the reference is to Rezaïna, north of Circessium, which was called "Theodosiopolis". Theopolis is, obviously, a corruption of this name. The Arab chroniclers mention Rezaïna (Theodosiopolis). See also Saint-Martin in *Lebeau*, XII, p.60, note 6, and Huart, *op.cit.*, I, 265.

When Ashot died, the Byzantines appointed Narses Kamsarakan, prince of Shirak, as ruler of Armenia to whom the title of "Curopalate" was given.[105] When he died, Sbat Bagratouni was appointed ruler who bought Armenia again under the Arab yoke when the Byzantines were defeated.[106]

However, another question arises: it has been maintained in accordance with the sources[107] that the Byzantines remained rulers of Armenia from 686 to 693 and that they installed garrisons there numbering up to 30,000 soldiers. Since the Byzantines were the masters of Armenia how could they have agreed to continue sharing the Armenian taxes with the Arabs? What seems, therefore, possible is that the Arabs continued to occupy a large part of Armenia.

In any event, Justinian committed the same error as his predecessors: he tried to unite the Churches of Armenia and Constantinople by making the first an appendage of the second. Some historians maintain that he invited,[108] others that he ordered,[109] in the 5th year of his reign = 689-690 the patriarch of Armenia, Sahak (Isaak), as well as other bishops to come to Constantinople for the purpose of accepting in writing the canonical rules of the Chalcedon Council.[110] When the clergymen returned to Armenia they met with disapprobation, were forced to retract and, what is more, to pronounce anathema on themselves.[111]

105. Acoghig, p.72. — Toumanoff, *Iberia*.

106. Theophanes, p.366 for the year 6185 = 692-3. — Zonaras, III, 322. — Koulakovski, III, 264. — Wellhausen, *op.cit.*, p.432. — Laurent, *op.cit.*, p.204.

107. Theophanes, p.363. — Garitte in *De Rebus Armeniae*, pp.46-47. — Ghevond, pp.16-18. — Acoghig, pp.72 and 353.

108. *De Rebus Armeniae*, pp.46-47.

109. Acoghig de Daron.

110. In other words, to accept Diphysitism. The Armenians were monophysites.

111. *De Rebus*, p.47. — Brehier, *Vie et Mort*, p.48. — Kulakovski, III, 257.

3

When Abd al-Malik ben Marwan assumed the Caliphate, the situation in the Arab Empire was far from easy. As written in the previous volume, when Yazid assumed the Caliphate following the death of his father Muawiyah, a great number of the nobles of Medina refused to recognise his legitimacy. Among them were Hussein ben Ali, the son of the murdered Caliph Ali, cousin and son-in-law of the Prophet, Abdallah ben Zubayr, and others. Most of them found refuge in Mecca and undertook to incite the people. When Hussein died, Abdallah ben Zubayr proclaimed himself Caliph. He was recognised by all the Arab provinces with the exception of Syria and Palestine. Marwan, who was then Caliph, barely managed to have himself recognised in Egypt. The rest of the Arab Empire recognised Abdallah who was somehow considered to be the representative of the great noble families of Mecca and of Medina. These families were highly displeased because the Ummayiads had been in permanent possession of the Caliphate.[112] In the meantime, Syria had been hit by the plague and because of a bad harvest there was famine and thousands perished.[113]

In the regions which had once been Persian, someone named Mukhtar ben abi Ubayd al Takafi, or, as Theophanes calls him, Mukhtar the Liar, succeeded in proclaiming himself prophet.[114] Mukhtar was a Shi'a [115] and originally had recognised Ibn Zubayr and had fought on his side. Zubayr had sent Mukhtar to the Eastern Provinces.[116] Mukhtar was extremely intelligent and managed in time to acquire many followers in the other Persian provinces where the Shi'as were powerful. Soon enough, in the 66th year of the Hegira = 685-6,[117] he became master of Kufa,

112. Gibb, in *E.I.*, new ed., Vol. I, p.56.
113. Theophanes, p.364. — *Chronicle of the Arabs*, in *Baethgen, Fragmente.*
114. Theophanes, p.356. — Agapius, p.234. — Michael the Syrian, II, 468
115. Muslim heresy followed by all those who believe that the successor of Mohammed should have been Ali. They also challenge the authenticity of certain passages in the Koran. Today, they prevail in Persia.
116. Maçoudi, V,171.
117. Abul'Fedae, p.118. — Suyuti, p.219.

the main Arab centre of the region, and then of Mesopotamia and the Eastern Provinces.

Abd al-Malik gathered an army at the head of which he placed Ubayd Allah ibn Ziyad, whose father had been recognised by Muawiyah as his brother. In a battle which took place on the banks of the river Kazir near Mossul, ibn Ziyad was defeated and killed.[118] Abd al-Malik, who was hastening to his assistance, was informed of the defeat of his army, of the fact that the brother of the anti-Caliph Mussab ibn Zubayr had invaded Palestine and of the fact that the Byzantine army was marching against Syria. He was thus obliged to return to Damascus to cope with the situation. On his way through Mesopotamia he conquered Nisibis, Rezaina and Circessium which had surrendered to Mukhtar.[119] Hastily, he then sent an embassy to ask the Byzantines for a peace treaty.

Mussab, who was an excellent soldier, beloved by the Arabs, marched at the head of an army against Mukhtar, defeated him and then kept under siege for a period of four mounths the fortress of Kufa. Finally, in the 67th year of the Hegira = 687[120] he killed Mukhtar and thousands of his followers.

The peace treaty with the Byzantines enabled Abd al-Malik to use his army against the anti-Caliph, whose forces had been renewed after the victories of his brother. However, he was twice defeated by Mussab, who may have been the final victor had he been supported by the Kharijites.[121] Abd al-Malik gathered new forces from Syria, Egypt and Mesopotamia and together with his brother Mohammed ben Marwan, a clever and good general,

118. Theophanes, p.363 "Ziyad brother of Muawiyah". — *Chronicle of the year 1234.* — Maçoudi, V, pp.218-25. — Tabari, Zotenberg ed., IV, 96-97 for the 66th year of the Hegira 685-6. — Suyuti, p.219. — Ibn al-Athir, III-IV. — Yakubi, II, 281, 288-91, 406-421.

119. Theophanes, p.363. — Baethgen, *op.cit.*, for the year 997 = 686, 67th of the Hegira = 686-7. — Maçoudi, V. 224-232.

120. Theophanes, p. 364. — Maçoudi, V. 240-1. — Lammens, in *E.I.*, o.ed., III, 793. — Müller, *Der Islam*, usw., I, pp.378 ff. — Levi della Vida, in *E.I.*, o.ed. III, p.765 ff.

121. Kharijites, or Kharourgites, Theophanes, 347.30. Muslim heresy conceived by those who were on the side of Ali, but who did not accept the arbitration between Ali and Muawiyah.

marched against Irak. Mussab had encamped on the borders of Mesopotamia. Abd al-Malik managed to buy off some of the chieftains who were in Mussab's army. Mussab, betrayed by his own followers, fell heroically in battle.[122]

Soon after his victory, al-Malik ordered his able general Hajjaj al Yusuf to march at the head of an army towards Hedjaj against the anti-Caliph. Hajjaj brought peace to the region and then attacked Mecca which he beseiged for seven months. Finally, the city surrendered. Abdallah ibn Zubayr was killed in battle in October, or November 692.[123] Hajjaj conquered all of Arabia, Irak and Persia and thus this civil strife, which had lasted for seven years, ended with Abd al-Malik as the sole master.[124]

4

A complex problem which calls for a solution is the following: Why did a war break out between the Arabs and the Byzantines? What were the causes and who were responsible for its occurrence? The sources throw little light on the matter and Theophanes is particularly obscure, so that it is very difficult to arrive at conclusions. An analysis of Theophanes' account will prove that he himself was unaware of the weaknesses and fictitious elements present in his narration.

Theophanes[125] writes that the following events took place in the year 6183 = 691-2, 6th year of Justinian's reign = 690-1, 8th year of Abimeleh = 690-1: 1. That Justinian, out of sheer foolishness, dissolved the peace treaty with Abimeleh (Abd al-Malik). Cendrenus, Zonaras and Leo the Grammarian state the same. 2. That Justinian decided to transplant the citizens of

122. Theophanes, p.364. — Chronicle of the Arabs for the 71st year = 690-1 in Baethgen, *op.cit.* — Tabari, Goeje ed., II, 662-688, 716-765 etc. — Maçoudi, V, 240-249. — Huart, *Histoire*, II, 265. — Marçais, *Le Monde Oriental*, p.204. — Muir, *Annales* p.445.

123. Theophanes, p.364 for the year 6181, 4th year of Justinian's reign = 688-9, a rather improbable date. — Huwarazmi, in *Baethgen* for the 73rd year = 692-3. — Maçoudi, V, 260-266, who fixes 14 Djoumada I, 73rd year. — Gibb, in *E.I.*, n.ed., I, p.56 ff. — Perier, *Vie D'al Hadjdjadj*, p.30.

124. Theophanes, p.365. — Tabari, Zotenberg ed., IV, 152.

125. Theophanes, p.335.

Cyprus; that during the voyage many were drowned or died of illness; that the survivors returned to Cyprus. 3. That he refused to accept the peace tax which was due to him under the terms of the treaty because the coins did not bear the Roman seal but a new Arabian one; that Abimeleh "with diabolical hypocrisy" pleaded that the peace treaty not be dissolved and that the coins be accepted in view of the fact that the weight of gold was the one agreed upon and thus the Romans suffered no loss. 4. That Justinian attributed this plea to fear and did not realise that Abimeleh's real motive was to find a way to stop "the Mardaites who had turned against him" and that the issue over the coins was just an excuse for dissolving the peace treaty.

First, I should like to examine point 3 which refers to Justinian's refusal to accept the new coins minted by the Arabs. The question is, when were these coins minted? As I have already written[126] the coins minted by the Arabs in the old Byzantine regions, which they had conquered, were the same as the Greek coins. They bore Greek or Arab inscriptions, a Byzantine cross and the image of the Byzantine Emperors.[127]

With time, the inscriptions were both in Greek and in Arabian and the year of mintage appears to follow the chronology of the Hegira. Eventually, though the shape remained the same as the Byzantine, the cross disappears but the other imperial insignia remained.[128] Then the Greek inscriptions disappear. In the British Museum there is a coin minted in the year 695 bearing the portrait of Heraclius and of his two sons. On the reverse side in place of the cross there is an inscription which reads "in the name of Allah, etc."[129]

It is not known when the first, purely Arabian coins were minted. According to Walker, the last coins of a Greek type were minted in the 75th year of the Hegira = 694-5. In any event, the coins which the Emperor received from the Arabs as tax for the

126. Stratos, Vols. II, p.121 and III, pp. 142-143, 151.

127. Lavoix, H., *Catalogue des monnaies*, Vol. I. — Lane-Pool St., *Catalogue of Oriental*, Vol. IX. — Walker, J.A., *Catalogue*.

128. Lavoix, *op.cit.*

129. Walker, J., *Two Arab-Byzantine dinars.*

treaty concluded with Muawiyah and renewed by Justinian bore Arab inscriptions.[130]

It is possible that some samples had been minted, especially after Abd al-Malik's supremacy. It has been said that this occurred in the 73rd year of the Hegira=692-3, in the 74th=693-4 and in the 76th=695-6.[131] However, no such coins have survived. The Arab chroniclers give different dates for the mintage of new coins and usually refer to the 74th or 75th=694-5 year of the Hegira. Wakidi[132] writes that al-Malik began to mint new coins in the 76th year=695-6. However, since it is certain that the coins were minted after 692[133] we cannot agree with the view that Justinian declared war because he did not wish to accept that these coins represented the peace tax.[134] Moreover, as it was the Arabs who first invaded Byzantine territory and not *vice versa*, I am convinced that it was they who first declared war. Now, if the argument over the coins was the cause of war, why should the Arabs be the aggressors? Surely, to try and force Justinian into accepting them was out of the question. Hence, the account given by Theophanes seems incorrect.

As far as point 4 is concerned, i.e., that an excuse was being sought that would stop the hostilities of the Mardaites, it is, to say the least, totally unrealistic. This is yet another proof of the unreliability of the chronology concerning this period on which so many of our modern historians rely. Theophanes himself writes (p. 363) that one of the terms of the treaty concerned the removal of the Mardaites.[135] It was Justinian who undertook to do this thus "maiming the Roman dynasty" and "destroying the bronze wall". According to Theophanes this occurred in 686-7,

130. Lavoix, *op.cit.*, I. XXV and ff.

131. Grabar, A., *L'Iconoclasme* p.68 ff. — Grierson, Ph., *The Monetary Reforms of Abd al-Malik.*

132. Tabari, De Goeje ed., 2, 939.

133. Huwarazmi, in *Baethgen* for the year 76=695-6. — Ibn Adhari, p.22 for the 76th year. — Eliae Nisibeni, p.73 for the same year.

134. Müller, *Der Islam*, usw., *I.b.* 413. — Breckenridge, *The Numismatic*, pp.72-74.

135. See paragraph 1 of the same chapter.

according to the Arab chroniclers in 688-9. How could this issue over the removal of the Mardaites recur in 691-2? The version given by Theophanes, therefore, bears no relation to fact.

The account given about the transplantation of the Cypriots to the region of Kyzicus seems more reliable. This is confirmed by the Syrian chroniclers[136] who add that al-Malik complained to Justinian for breaking his vows before the expiration of the ten year peace treaty. In one of the Syrian sources[137] we read that when the Caliph was informed of the transplantation, he considered that Justinian had violated the peace treaty and ordered his brother to invade Romania. This account about the transplantation is true and is confirmed by the minutes of the "penthecte" Ecumenical Synod, which we shall discuss in our next chapter. Justinian brought the Cypriots to the region of Kyzicus where he built a new city and named it "New Justinianoupolis". There he installed the bishop of Cyprus.[138] It appears that this was a mass transportation, which did not occur because Cyprus was overrun by the Arabs, as Michael the Syrian suggests, but because it was part of Justinian's more general policy to colonise those areas which had been deserted as, for example, the peninsula of Kyzicus. This move, however, was against the interests of the Caliph. The terms of the treaty stated that the two nations should divide between them the revenue of Cyprus. If the largest part of the population was removed, then the revenue would greatly diminish. This was considered a violation of the treaty[139] and undoubtedly constituted one of the main reasons for the outbreak of war. The Caliph protested vigorously, but his protestations met with rejection.

There is yet another issue which may be considered as an added reason for the war. It concerns papyri which was Egypt's monopoly, as Egypt was the only country where it was produced. Usually, on the papyri the name of the king was written under a cross. When the Arabs conquered Egypt this production

136. Michael the Syrian, II, 470. — Abul' Faraj Bar Hebraeus.

137. *Chronicon, ad A.D. 1234*, p.230.

138. Brooks, *op.cit.*, II, 406. — Hill, G., *A History of Cyprus*, I, pp.288-9.

139. Ostrogorsky, *op.cit.*, p.131. — Jenkins in *Constantine Porphyrogennetus De Ad. Imp.*, II, p.181. — Breckenridge, *op.cit.*, p.70.

continued as it enabled the Arabs to continue importing gold, which formed the basis of their monetary system. With time, the cross and name of the king disappeared and the papyri exported to Byzantium and the West were inscribed with an invocation to the Holy Trinity. Subsequently, Abd al-Malik ordered that the Christian inscription be replaced by the words: "Allah is the only God".[140] Justinian protested and asked the Caliph to delete this inscription. The Caliph refused and the king answered that he would then be obliged to inscribe on the coins insulting words against Mohammed. Therefore, it is quite probable that this affair may have played its part as a cause for war.

What is now left to examine is Theophanes' first phrase, i.e., that Justinian out of sheer foolishness dissolved the peace treaty. This, however, was not the case. For, it is only logical to assume that as the Arabs were the first to invade, it was they who violated the peace treaty.[141] The fact remains that we are not in a position to know whether it was Justinian or the Caliph who should be held responsible for the war. It is possible, that once internal strife had subsided, Abd al-Malik thought twice before paying the peace tax to the Byzantines.

According to the Arabs and certain Syrian chroniclers,[142] it was Mohammed ibn Marwan, brother of the Caliph and governor of Mesopotamia, who invaded Byzantine territory. At the same time Justinian, who had contemptuously rejected the Caliph's protests, was also preparing for war. As the Byzantine

140. Wellhausen, *The Arab Kingdom*, p.217. — Cipolla, *Money, Prices*, p.17 ff. — Lopez, *Mohammed*. — Lavoix, *op.cit.*, I. XXI-XXV

141. Breckenridge, *op.cit.*, p.69.

142. Baladhuri in Brooks, *The Arabs*, p.207, who dates this invasion in the 74th year May 693-May 694. This chronicler explicitly states that Mohammed broke the peace treaty and invaded the "Roman territory". See also the Hitti ed., p.294. Tabari, on the authority of Wakidi, Goeje ed. II. 853, dates this invasion and the battle which followed in the 73rd year of the Hegira, May 692-May 693. — Ibn Athir, IV 295 for the year 73. — *Chronicle of the year 1294*, p.230. — Michael the Syrian, II, 470. — Bar Hebraeus, *Syrian Chronicle*, Bruns-Kirsch ed. p.118. — Eliae Nisibeni, p.73 for the Syrian year 1003 = 692 and the 73rd of the Hegira. — Khuwarazmi, in *Baethgen*, for the 73rd year or 1003.

chroniclers state,[143] he enlisted from among the Slavs, whom he had brought to Bithynia, 30,000 men to whom he gave the name "the chosen people". At the head of this army he placed a man named Nebulos who is described by Nicephorus as "one of the noblest". The Byzantine cavalry joined this army and together they headed towards Sebastoupolis "which lies by the sea". This last sentence, encountered in Theophanes, complicates the whole matter as to the place in which the battle occurred. Where is this city "Sebastoupolis" which lies "by the sea"? All the towns bearing this name in Asia Minor are known[144] and none lies by the sea. There is only one such possible, obscure town which is situated far north[145] on the eastern banks of the Black Sea. This is Sebastoupolis-Dioscuria[146] which, however, is far too removed from any axis of invasion. Lebeau suggests that instead of "Sebastoupolis" we should read "Sebasteia"[147] of Cilicia which indeed lies by the sea. Brooks,[148] however, rightly disagrees. Mohammed was not governor of Syria but of Mesopotamia. The obvious route of invasion from this region lies through Melitene which leads directly to Sebasteia. Sebastoupolis (Sulu-Saray) is situated nearby to the northwest of Sebasteia on the north imperial road which leads from Constantinople to Theodosioupolis and Amaseia and thence descends towards Sebasteia and Caesaria. Hence, it is beyond

143. Theophanes, p.366 for the year 6184=692-3. — Cedrenus, p.772. — George the Monk, pp.729-30. — Zonaras, III, 321. — Leo the Grammarian, p.163. — Nicephorus, p.36.

144. See Ramsay, *Geography.*

145. Maricq, *Notes sur les Slaves.*

146. It lies between the Lazike and the Abasgea. It was destroyed by Chosroes I and was rebuilt and fortified by Justinian I. See Procopius, *On Buildings*, Haury ed. 3, 7, 8.

147. This opinion is shared by Saint-Martin, in Lebau, XII, p.21, note 21, who writes that in Kippert's map Sebasteia is to be seen lying across the island Eleoussa. Bury agrees with this view II, 322 and so do Finlay, I, 389, Paparrigopoulos, 260-1, Huart, I, 226, Hitti, 212, Wellhausen, especially in his study *Die Kämpfe der Araber*, pp.431-2, *The Arab Kingdom*, p.216 because he is misled by the Syrians and Arabs who mention Sebasteia. — Müller, I.b 414, presents both views.

148. Brooks, in *C.M.H.* II, 407 and *The Locality*, etc.

doubt that the reference is to Sebastoupolis of Cappadocia or, following the division of Asia Minor, of Armenia II. Maricq, Gregoire and others agree with this. It is obvious that Theophanes was wrong when he wrote that the city was situated "by the sea". Now, taking into consideration the above, we may conclude that Mohammed entered through Melitene and then marched towards Sebasteia. It is not known whether he conquered the city or not. When Justinian was informed of the invasion, he marched with his army from Nicomedeia of Bithynia eastwards and following the north imperial route arrived at Amaseia, descended towards Sebasteia and entered Sebastoupolis. Mohammed, either because he was still on his razzia, or because he was informed of the direction which the Byzantine army had taken, marched to Sebastoupolis and there the battle took place.

It is unfortunate that the accounts given about the battle by Theophanes and the other Byzantine chroniclers are so absurd that it is impossible to believe them. They say that the Arabs insisted on the terms of the treaty, therefore they hung the document upon which the treaty had been signed on the point of a lance before they "fell upon the Romans". Quite apart from the fact that it is rather improbable to believe that so many copies of the peace treaty were in existence, the fact that the Arabs had advanced so far into Byzantine territory and that it was they who aggressively "fell upon the Romans" makes one wonder whether they were indeed so keen to preserve the peace treaty.

The battle was probably fought towards the end of May 693 and this accounts for the difference with the Hegira year. The 37rd year of the Hegira ended on May 12 and the 74th began on the 13th. According to Theophanes, the Arabs at first were losing the battle. Yet, during the night, Mohammed sent to Nebulos, leader of the Slavs, an arrow case full of gold coins and many enticing promises. Nebulos was thus convinced to betray the Byzantines and add his 20,000 men to the Arab army. The following morning the Arabs attacked and won an overwhelming victory. Leo the Grammarian states that the Byzantines suffered very heavy losses.

The Syrian chroniclers, who seem to agree with the Byzantines as to the number of Slavs who deserted, state that it must have been up to 7,000.[149] Surely, that of 20,000 is an exaggeration. These Slavs were settled by the Arabs in Syria, near Antioch. The Arab sources state that after his victory Mohammed plundered the whole region all the way to Caesaria.[150]

Excepting Nicephorus, the Byzantine chroniclers state Justinian was so angered against the Slavs that when he arrived at a place "called Leucati, a rocky spot by the sea in the bay of Nicomedeia" he killed all the remaining Slavs as well as "the women and children". It is interesting to note that this information is not confirmed by any other source. However, one cannot but question its veracity for the distance from Sebastoupolis to the bay of Nicomedeia is such that it requires days, if not weeks of marching. Why then should Justinian march with all those thousands and feed them for so many days only to kill them near Nicomedeia? Many contemporary historians reject this information.[151] A seal has been discovered which belonged to the imperial delegate who governed the region where the Slavs had settled, bearing the title of the consul. According to Schlumberger it mentions "the mercenaries, the Slavs of the province of Bithynia" and bears the date Indiction 8". Pancenco, who first discovered it, dates it at 650 and Charanis agrees with him. Nevertheless, I believe that no Slavs had settled in the region of Bithynia before Constantine III (Constans) undertook his expedition in 658. Kulakovski dates the seal at 710-11, while Ostrogorsky and Gregoire at 694-5 as it bears a youthful portrait of Justinian II and this precludes a later date. This seal provides us with proof that in those days many

149. Michael the Syrian, II, 470. — Bar Hebraeus, *op.cit.*, p.118.

150. Brooks wonders if "Caesarea" mentioned by Michael the Syrian is not an error, the reference being to Neocaesarea, from where the road leads to Samosata and Mesopotamia.

151. Ostrogorsky, *op.cit.*, p.130. — Maricq, *op.cit.*, Charanis, *The Slavic Element*, who writes that the Russian historians Lamanski and Uspenski as well as others do not accept this information. Justinian had friendly relations with the Slavs.

Slavs had settled in Bithynia. Therefore, Theophanes' account about the massacre of the Slavs is erroneous.

The Byzantines suffered as a result of their defeat. In Armenia the situation had become very difficult after Leontius' invasion and the plundering of the land. One of the princes of Armenia, Sbad Bagratuni, asked the Arabs to support him in declaring war on the Byzantines.[152] In the 73rd year=693, the Caliph appointed as governor of Armenia Mohammed ibn Marwan.[153] The Byzantines were forced to evacuate Armenia and while the evacuation was going on Sbad massacred a great number.

Facts concerning the continuation of the war until 695 are very confusing. The sources provide us with various contradictory dates. In the 74th year of the Hegira a certain Mohammed (who in fact we do not know), with the assistance of the Slavs who had deserted to the Arabs, invaded Byzantine territory and plundered the region.[154]

The Byzantines report[155] that in 695 Mohammed invaded Armenia IV, while the Syrians and the Arabs in particular maintain that the Byzantines were the first to attack and that Mohammed's invasion followed. The Byzantines marched through Germanicea (Marash) and invaded the area around Antioch. There, they were defeated in battle by the Arabs whose leader was the governor of Kinnesrin.[156] Naturally, the

152. Theophanes, p.366, for the year 6185=693-94, 8th year of Justinian=692-3, hence 693 "having heard of the defeat of the Romans, he delivered Armenia to the Arabs..." Zonaras, III, 322. — *Chronicle of the year 1234*, p.231, that he delivered it to Mohammed ibn Marwan. — *De Rebus Armeniae*, p.355. — Ghevond, p.18. — Laurent, *L'Armenie*, p.204. — Wellhausen, *op.cit.*

153. Zambaur, *Manuel*, p.178.

154. Theophanes, p.367, for the year 6186=694-5, 9th year of Justinian=693-4.- Baladhuri, p.188. — Wellhausen, *op.cit.* I state which Mohammed because some sources mention Mohammed ibn Maslamah.

155. Theophanes, p.368 for the year 6187, 10th year of Justinian=695. It is the same year in which the revolt against Justinian took place.

156. Michael the Syrian, II, 470. — Baladhuri, pp.188-9. — Eliae Bar Sinaya, p.94. — Yakubi, II, 336-7. — Wellhausen, *op.cit.*, — Brooks, *op.cit.* — Dulaurier, p.236.

chroniclers exaggerate the number of losses bringing it up to 40,000. Mohammed ibn Marwan marched to Germanicea (Armenia IV) and took many captives.[157] It has also been stated that a battle occurred in the environs of Melitene.[158] Here, I would like to emphasise the fact that the dates given are so confusing and contradictory that it is impossible to arrive at any definite conclusions as to whether it was Mohammed who first invaded Armenia IV, or the Byzantines the Antioch area. In any event, it is certain that these invasions and battles took place in the summer of 695.

I have already referred to Africa in the first paragraph of this chapter. After the death of Zuhayr ibn Kais in 688-9, no hostilities were directed against the Exarchate. Al Aziz ben Marwan, brother of the Caliph, was still governor of Egypt but he did not have adequate forces to undertake an expedition to the West. Al Malik was busy fighting the anti-Caliph ibn Zubayr. It was only after the defeat of the anti-Caliph that Abd al-Malik appointed Hassan ben al-Numan, of the tribe of the Ghassanids of Syria, governor of Africa and ordered him to go with a small force of men to Egypt and perhaps to Barca of Lybia.[159] He was appointed governor in the 69th or the 74th year[160] of the Hegira. At all events, it was soon after the death of the anti-Caliph that the clash with the Byzantines occurred, hence it was not possible to use on this far away campaign more than a small number of men. It was only after 694 that al-Malik was in a position to turn his attention and his forces to this affair and to reinforce Hassan's army with 40,000 men, the largest Arab army which ever gathered in Africa.[161] Hassan was ordered to invade and

157. The same chroniclers as above and Tabari, II, 863.

158. Ibn al-Athir, IV, 338. — Brooks, *op.cit.*

159. Al-Maliki, p.143, with 6,000 men.

160. For the 69th year of the Hegira = 688 Ubayd Allah, p.40. — Al-Maliki, p.143. — Ibn Khaldoun, I, 213. This information, however, does not seem correct because Zubayr had not been killed as then. For the 74th year Ibn al-Athir, IV, 300. — Noweiri, p.71.

161. Noweiri, *op.cit.* — Kairouani, p.35 ff. — Ibn Adhari, pp.24-25. — Ubayd Allah, p.40.

conquer Byzantine Africa.[162] In 695, 76th year of the Hegira, Hassan seized Kairouan and various other southern towns of the Exarchate. The chronology concerning these events, as well as the conquest of Carthage, with which we shall deal in another chapter, differs greatly in the chronicles, therefore it is not possible to date them with any precision.[163]

162. Abd al-Hakam. — Eliae Nisibeni, p.74. — Noweiri, who gives various dates.

163. Diehl, *La Domination Byzantine*, p.582. — Wellhausen, *Die Kämpfe*, p.434-5. — Caudel, *Les Premières* pp.151-2. — Caetani, *Chronographia*, pp. 911.26. — Marçais, G., *La Berberie*, pp.33-4. — Talbi, *Hassan ben al-Numan.*

CHAPTER IV

ECCLESIASTICAL POLICY

Justinian's ecclesiastical policy was rather curious and has unfortunately been grossly misunderstood. The Byzantine chroniclers took an unfavourable view of him and persistently tried to prove that his policy was wrong and disastrous for Byzantium. The Western chroniclers show an even more hostile attitude. They misrepresent many of his actions and this in spite of the fact that Justinian tried to maintain friendly relations with the Church of Rome.

Justinian treated the archbishops of Rome with great respect and, as far as possible, tried to keep peace with them. It was, however, very difficult for him to forget that he was Emperor of Rome (irrespective of whether he spoke Latin or not) and that the Pope, though one of the highest, was still his subject having to obey and carry out his orders. Being a Christian, the Emperor was, of course, in matters concerning faith second to the Patriarch. Given the fact, however, that it was in his power to appoint or depose the Patriarch and that his consent was required for the ordination of the Pope, he not only exerted an influence, but held true authority over them.

It is unfortunate that in Rome the theory had begun to spread that the Western Church should hold sway over the others and that all should comply with her rules. The times were favourable for such a theory since there were only two free Christian Churches: that of Rome and that of Constantinople. Under such conditions it was only inevitable that relations between the two Churches would deteriorate. One should also not fail to take into account the fact that Justinian assumed the throne when he was but a youth of 16 or 17 years old who had been brought up with the doctrine of Caesaropapism. For, in ancient Rome the Emperor was both head of State and *Pontifex Maximus*, that is, supreme religious authority.

It is only by taking into consideration the above that we shall be in a position to understand the causes which led to a disruption of relations between the two Churches and the ecclesiastical policy which was followed during this period.

1

During the first and second reign of Justinian, as well as of the Emperors Leontius and Tiberius-Apsimarus, that is from 685 to 711, the following served as heads of the two great Churches:
Constantinople:

1. Patriarch George, December 679 to January/February 686.

2. Patriarch Theodore I, 686-687. After the death of the above, he was appointed. He had been deposed in December 679 by Constantine IV because he refused to call an Ecumenical Synod (subsequently the 6th) to deal with the question of Monothelitism.[164]

3. Patriarch Paul III, January 688 to August/September 694.[165] Paul was a layman. It is possible that he had held the office of "asecretes" of the Emperor. He is referred to as "magnificant".[166]

4. Callinicus I, treasurer or Elder of the Church of Blachernae: September 694 to end of 705 or beginning of 706.[167] The precise date of his deposition cannot be determined.[168]

5. Cyrus the Elder and monk of the "island"(?) Amastris. This information given by Nicephorus is not exact for Amastris is

164. Stratos, A. *op.cit.*, Vol. IV, pp.117, 123. — Zonaras, III, 319.

165. For August 694. Grumel, *La Chronologie*. — Brooks, *On the Lists*. — Nicephorus, *Brief Chronicle*, p.119. — Grumel, in *Actes des Patriarches* writes 693, this date, however, does not seem to be correct as Grumel corrects it in a later book.

166. Nicephorus, as above "lay asecretes". Asecretes or asicretes was the name for the private secretary.

167. Nicephorus, *op.cit.*, 12 years. — Brooks, *op.cit.*, — Grumel, *op.cit.*

168. The difficulty arises from the fact that both Theophanes, p.367, and Nicephorus, p.119, mention 12 years, hence, Sept. 694-706. However, Callinicus was blinded and demoted earlier.

not an island but a city in Pontus. He held the office from the autumn of 705 until December 711.[169]

Rome:

1. John V, from 23.8.685 to 2.8.686. He was of Syrian descent. During his office relations with Constantinople were good.

2. Conon, from 21.10.686 to 12.6.687. He had grown up in Sicily.[170] His father was an army officer from the Thracesian area.[171] When Pope John died, there was great disagreement concerning his successor. A faction of lay and religious voters stood by the elder Peter, whilst another which also had the army's support by Theodore. Finally, Theodore the Exarch intervened and the two parties agreed to elect the elder Conon.[172]

3. Sergius I, from 15.12.687 to 8.9.701.[173] He too was of Syrian descent from Antioch. His family had settled in Sicily. The electorate was again divided over his case. One faction elected Theodore, the other the archdeacon Paschalis. Paschalis came to an understanding with the new Exarch of Ravenna, John Platinios(?) and promised to pay him 7,200 gold coins if he supported his election and ordination. Meantime, the two opposed factions had each occupied a part of the Lateran transforming it into a bastion. Theodore occupied the inner side

169. Nicephorus, 6 years. — Theophanes, p.374, 6 years. — Grumel, Chronologie, dates the spring of 706 to the beginning of 712, whereas in *Actes*, p.127-128, he writes, Autumn 705 - December 711. Brooks accepts Sept. 705 - Jan. 712.

170. *L.P.* I, 368

171. The region which, subsequently in the 8th century was organised as a theme. Thracesian Theme. Main cities: Ephessus and Smyrna. In those days it was a "tourma", i.e., an army division of the great Anatolikon theme. Obviously, Conon's father participated in the army corps of the "Thracesian division" which formed part of Constantine III's army when he marched against the Lombards and settled in Sicily in 663. See Constantine Porphyrogennetus, *De Them.*, p.67 and notes of Pertusi in same p.124.

172. *L.P.* I, p.368 ff., and notes 2 and 3 of Duchêsne. — Gay, *Quelques remarques.* — Hodgkin, *op.cit.*, VI, 350.

173. *L.P.* I, p.371 ff.— Grumel, *La Chronologie*, p.431. — Andrea Dandulo, who mistakenly writes 9 years, 18 months and 23 days.

to the left of the grand staircase, Paschalis the right side to the right of the grand staircase. Fights occurred daily. The two opposed factions carried out negotiations. Finally, at a conference which was held in the Palatinate (the imperial palace which was the customary residence of the Exarch and the governor of Rome), the Synod of Rome, the aldermen and the heads of the army decided to elect Sergius as Pope. However, the Exarch, who could not reverse the decision but could refuse to ratify it, demanded the 7,200 gold coins promised to him by Paschalis in order to give his approval of the election and ordination. The money was collected and Sergius was enthroned.[174] It was during his time that disagreements with Constantinople arose.

4. John VI, from 30.10.701 to 11.1.705.[175] John was of Greek descent. During his time the great attack against Rome by the Lombards of the Duchy of Beneventum took place.

5. John VII, from 1.3.705 to 18.10.707. He too was of Greek descent.

6. Sisinnius, from 15.1.708 to 4.2.708. He was Pope for only twenty days. He was of Syrian descent.

7. Constantine, from 25.3.708 to 9.4.715.[176] He was also of Syrian descent.

2

A letter written by Justinian to Pope John V[177] has caused great difficulties and arguments among scholars. The Emperor wrote that he feared the minutes of the 6th Ecumenical Synod would be falsified. Various documents had illegitimately been found in the hands of people who did not have the Emperor's permission to acquire them. It is true that there was no real

174. *L.P.* I, p.371 ff. See also notes of Duchêsne. — Jaffe-Wattenbach, *Regesta*, p.244. — Hodgkin, *op.cit.*, VI. 351 ff. — Gay, *op.cit.* — Homo, *Rome Medievale*, p.33.

175. *L.P.* I, p.383 ff. — Grumel, *op.cit.*

176. *L.P.* I, p.385 ff. — Grumel, *op.cit.* — Mann, *The Lives*, I, pp.109-140 for the last three Popes.

177. Mansi, XI, 737-38. — Migne, P.G. Vol. 96, pp.424-428.

danger for a falsification of the Synod's acts since an authentic copy bearing the signatures of all the participants had been sent to the Pope.[178] It was on the basis of this document that Pope Leo II (682-683) had approved the official minutes of the Synod.[179] The Pope had informed the Emperor by letter of this approval.[180]

Justinian assembled all the relevant documents and called for a convocation in which the following people were present: the Patriarchs,[181] the legates of the Pope, the Bishops and Metropolitans of the Synod of Constantinople, the Senate, various officials of the court, the representatives of the people(!) (these I suppose must have been the Demarchs of the two Demes), the chief of the Excubitors (who formed part of the imperial guards) and the officers of the "Christ-loving army"[182] of the imperial Opsikion, of the Anatolikon, the Thracesion and the Armeniakon themes, of the army of Italy, the "Cabarisianis" and "Septensianis", of Sardinia and of the army of Africa, etc. The minutes were signed by all and sealed. Justinian wrote a letter to Pope John giving a full report of the proceedings.[183] We only possess a bad translation of this letter and suspicions are entertained by Kyriakides that it may not be authentic. The letter bears the date Calends of March, 2nd year of Justinian's reign (686-687), 15 Indiction (686-687), hence, 17 February 687. This letter has given rise to many arguments.

The letter was received by Pope Conon and not by Pope John who had died six and a half months before.[184] Rightly, the question arises: how was it that no one in Constantinople had been informed of the Pope's death and of the election and

178. Hefélé-Leclercq, *Histoire des Conciles*, III, 559 and note 2.

179. *L.P.* I, p.359. — Jaffe-Wattenbach, *Regesta*, No. 2118. — Hefélé-Leclercq, *op.cit.*, p.514.

180. Stratos, *op.cit.*, IV, 129-130.

181. Of Constantinople and of Antioch.

182. "*Insuper etiam quosdam de Christo Dilectis obsequio*".

183. Mansi, XI, 737-738. — *L.P.* I, p.363. — Hefélé, *op.cit.*, III, 539.

184. *L.P.* clearly states that the letter was received by Pope Conon, however it was addressed to Pope John who in the meantime had died on August the 2nd 686.

coronation of another Pope? Does this seem possible?[185]

The reference made in the letter to "army units" has also given cause for discussion. Does this concern the themes as administrative units, or as army units proper?[186] The view has been advanced that the reference is to the themes as administrative units and that certain themes are not mentioned because they had not then been founded. However, I believe that a careful reading of the letter reveals that the reference concerns army units and their official representatives. Quite apart from the fact that the writer uses the word *Exercitus* (army) he also mentions the *Septensianis*, viz. those of Theouta (Septem), which was not a theme, and also the army of Sardinia, which again was not a theme, as well as the army of Africa. Theouta and Sardinia, however, were under the Exarch of Africa. Now, since the army of Africa is mentioned, which represented all the other armies under the jurisdiction of the theme of Africa, why should reference be made in the letter to all those who actually were subordinate to the Exarch? It is quite possible that the Exarch of Africa was not present in Constantinople, but only his representatives; whereas the generals of the armies of Theouta and of Sardinia were there in person. There are, however, other reasons[187] which lead one to

185. It has been maintained that because it was winter transportation by ship was not regular. However, John died on the 2nd of August and winter begins in December. Hence this version does not seem right.

186. Ostrogorsky, *op.cit.*, p.132. — Kyriakides. *Byzantine*, p.121 and note 1. — Lemerle, *Philippes*, p.120 note 2, 121 ff. These maintain that the reference concerned the representatives of administrative units of themes. The opposite view is advanced by: Gelzer, *Die Genesis*, p.19. — Diehl, *Etudes*, p.279. — Karayiannopoulos, Die *Enstehung*, p.34. I mention only a few of those who have dealt with the issue.

187. The order in which the units are mentioned is such that it does not allow one to conclude that the units are administrative. In Byzantium, a "rank" order was always maintained. Thus, the Opsikion theme ranks fourth and consequently can not precede the Anatolikon which is first or the Armeniakon which ranks second. What does "Thraciano" refer to? Is it the army of Thrace (Kyriakides, Ostrogorsky, etc.) or the army of Thracesians (see above note 171), who did not as yet form a theme but a division of the Anatolikon theme. If the reference is to Thrace then this theme comes first after all the Asian themes and, hence, cannot be mentioned before the Armeniakon. If, on the

the conclusion that the reference is to army units and their officers. Another issue which has caused discussion concerns the term "Cabarisianis" which as such means nothing. Gelzer argued that it should read "Calarisianis" since this was consistent with the name of Sardinia's capital.[188] However, since the writer refers directly to Sardinia why should he mention its capital also? Rightly, therefore, the term was corrected to read "Karavisianis", (the fleet) that is, of the Karavon.[189] It is probable that the representative of the fleet of the Karabisianis took part and signed the document concerning the Acts of the Synod. It is well known that a Karavon theme was never founded. Hence, this correction might well suffice to prove that the reference in the letter is to army and fleet units and not to administrative units.

During all the years of Justinian's first reign there were no religious persecutions. Nothing to that effect is mentioned in the sources. It is known, however, that a revival of the Paulician heresy occurred.[190] A court official named Simeon on the orders of Constantine IV cleared the area of Paulicians and put to death their leader Constantine-Siluanus (681-2). Subsequently, Simeon regretted his action, returned to Kibossa,[191] near Coloneia, and espoused the Paulician creed. He took the name of Titus and soon became a leader of the Paulician church. However, he unwisely entered into a disagreement with the Bishop of the area who then persistently asked for permission to persecute him. Justinian gave in and Titus as well as some of his followers were arrested and burnt at the stake. It is surmised that

other hand, the reference is to the division of Thracesians and hence simply to the representatives of the army units, then rightly the division is mentioned together with the army of the Anatolikon since it was under its command.

188. Today *Cagliari.* I should like to point out that it was not named Calaris but Caralis (Honigmann... *Georges de Chypre,* p.57). George of Cyprus refers to it as Caralis or Carallon, capital of the Sardinian Island. It was later that the named changed to Calari.

189. Diehl, *Etudes,* 285 and note 2. This theory was subsequently accepted by Gelzer and other historians.

190. Stratos, Vol. IV, p.131 ff.

191. Castle near Coloneia of Pontus, or first Armenia.

their death occurred between the years 688-695.[192] Besides this persecution, no other case is mentioned by the sources.

3

Justinian was a very religious man and liked to meddle in religious affairs.[193] The last two Ecumenical Synods (5th and 6th) had been concerned with matters of dogma. There were, however, other issues in need of regulation especially those of ecclesiastical discipline and those pertaining to such subjects as customs and *mores* surviving from the pagan tradition and still observed by the people in spite of the Church's opposition. The king wished to reform the ethical foundations of the Christian life[194] by abolishing all remnants from the pre-Christian era. For this reason, he agreed with Patriarch Paul[195] to call an Ecumenical Synod. The members assembled in the great domed hall of the palace[196] where, in the past, the sixth Ecumenical Synod had been held. It is not known whether the Western Church had been asked to participate, nevertheless the Pope's legates were present. The view advanced that the Western Church was kept in total ignorance of the discussions does not hold because the Synod lasted for a considerable time, which gave the Pope's legates all the time needed not only to notify Rome but to keep her informed of the proceedings.

The question has been raised as to the precise date the Synod took place. There is a reference in Canon 3 to "the 15th day of the month of January, of the past 4th Indiction, of the year 6109..."[197] The year 6109 is an error and must be corrected so as

192. Lemerle, *Histoire des Pauliciens*, p.63 ff. — *Ibid., Sources Grecques*, pp.3-67. — Runciman, *The Medieval Manichee*. — Garsoian, *The Paulician Heresy*, p.117 ff.

193. Ostrogorsky, *op.cit.*, p.138.

194. Bury, *op.cit.*, II, 326.

195. Sathas, *Synopsis*, p.115.

196. It is for this reason that this Synod is often refered to as the "The Council in Troullo".

197. Rallis and Potlis, *Constitution of the Divine and Sacred Canons*, II, 312.

to coincide with the year 692.[198] The 4th Indiction began on 1.9.691 and ended on 31.8.692. Hence, the date referred to is 15.1.692. However, as the Canon mentions "the past 4th Indiction" it is only reasonable for one to deduce that the Canon was composed on the following Indiction, i.e., 1.9.692-31.8.693. At this time, Justinian was busy fighting the Arabs. Unfortunately, no other source refers to the date, therefore we are forced to accept that in all probability the Synod convened at the end of 691 and completed its work sometime after the 1st of September 692, i.e., during the 5th Indiction.

Another issue in need of clarification is the number of bishops who participated in the Synod. According to one source[199] there were 277 bishops. Other sources[200] mention different numbers. Finally, it appears that those who signed were four Patriarchs, or locum-tenentes of Patriarchates,[201] and 211-213 bishops, the majority of whom were Greek, some Armenian and some from the East (Syrians, etc.). Basil, the Metropolitan of Gortynia, (Crete), also signed. Basil was apostolic legate of the Council of Rome and represented this council in the 6th Ecumenical Synod.

The Synod which was considered as a complement to the 5th and 6th Ecumenical Synods was named "Penthecte" and dealt only with disciplinary questions. Justinian's error was perhaps the fact that he wished the rules agreed upon by the Synod to have an ecumenical standing and this without having first come

198. Rallis and Potlis, *op.cit.* —Hefélé-Leclercq, *op.cit.*, III, 561.—Görres, *Justinian II*, pp.440-1. —Ostrogorsky, *op.cit.*, p.138.

199. "Zonaras and Balsamon" in Rallis and Potlis, *op.cit.*, II, 294.

200. Mansi, *op.cit.*, XI and XII, p.49 ff.— Hefélé, *op.cit.*— Görres, *op.cit.*— Laurent V., *L'Oeuvre Canonique.*

201. The Patriarchs were: Paul of Constantinople; George of Antioch, who dwelt in the capital because Antioch had been occupied by the Arabs; Anastasius, of whom it is not certain whether he was a Patriarch or a locum-tenents of the throne of Alexandria; and Anastasius, Patriarch or locum-tenents of the throne of Jerusalem, whose existence, however, has been questioned (see Lequien, III, 281).

202. The Illyricon, i.e., the Balkans, not including the great province of Thrace (Bulgaria and contemporary Greek and Turkish Thrace) and Crete were then under the jurisdiction of the Church of Rome.

to an agreement with the Western Church, as appears from the sources. The Synod did not take into account the customs, traditions, the political and social differences of East and West.[203] It has been argued that the eastern bishops were jealous of the fact that the Western Church had imposed its views on matters of dogma and, therefore, wished to subject Rome to the disciplinary rules prevalent in the East.[204] This, however, does not seem correct. I tend to believe that the bishops who participated wished rather to create a unified code of rules for both Churches.

Of the 102 canons which were finally agreed upon, I shall only mention those which are indicative of the customs of the age.

Rule 2 confirms the 85 Apostolic Canons. Already this canon conflicts with Rome's views which accepted only the first 50 canons.

The canons which follow the above concern the virginity of priests and the question of their marriage. There had always been a disagreement with Rome which forbade the marriage of clergymen while the Eastern Churches allowed it. A clause states that only one marriage is legal.

Canons 9 and 10 forbid clergymen to own inns and to collect interest on money lent.

Canon 11 forbids Christians, lay or the clergy to eat the unleavened bread of the Jews, to befriend them, or to take baths in the same place, or to accept medicine and medical treatment from them.

Other canons forbid clergymen to receive payment for performing the mysteries, to attend the races or other spectacles. Clergymen should *always* wear their priestly gown. Metropolitans should not seize the property of the bishops after their death. Hermits, dressed in black and with their hair unshorn, if they chance to enter a city should not mix with the citizens. Disobedience would entail as punishment the cutting of their hair and imprisonment in a monastery.

203. Bréhier, *Vie et Mort*, p.67. — *Ibid.*, *Les Derniers Heraclides*, p.194 ff.
204. Hergenröther, *Histoire de L'Eglise*, II, 343-4.

It was forbidden for women to sleep in a male monastery and for males in a female monastery.

Canons 50 and 51 forbade the popular game of dice, condemned mimes, theatrical plays and dances.

It was forbidden to fast on the Saturday of Lent, which was observed by the Western Church, because it came into contradiction with the rules of the 66th Apostolic Canon. It was also forbidden to offer milk and honey at the Holy Table.

Canon 61 stated that whoever consulted magicians, soothsayers or "ecatondarchs"[205] for the purpose of knowing the future should be punished. The same held for those who paraded bears, or other animals, or sold amulets with the hair of animals, thus fooling the simple people.[206]

Canon 62 forbade all pagan practices, which the Church in vain had tried to abolish. The feasts of the Calends were forbidden, as well as of the Vota, the Brumalia, and all fairs.[207] The masquarading of men as women and, in general, all costumes as well as the public dances of women and especially the feasts and fairs of 1st March were forbidden.[208]

The old custom of lighting fires before one's house or shop when there was a new moon and to dance around them was also

205. According to Balsamon, II, 444, these were elderly men who claimed to be sages.

206. During those years, when people were prone to superstition, the hair of certain animals was used as amulets against illness or as medicine. See Rallis and Potlis, II, 443 ff., for the explanations given by Zonaras and Balsamon.

207. Masquerades and parades were very popular with the Byzantines in spite of the Church's reaction. These took place during the feasts of the Calends, the first ten days of January, a custom surviving from Roman times. On the 1st of January, when the ecclesiastical year began, people dressed as animals and paraded singing and dancing. The main feasts occurred between Christmas and the Epiphany. The feast of Vota was on January 3rd, in honour of Pan. Symposia took place with great drinking and races at the Hippodrome. The feast of Brumalia took place between the 24th of November and the 17th of December. On the day of the longest night in the year great drinking took place in honour of Dionysus. See Balsamon, II, 450.— Kukulés, *Byzantine Life and Civilization*, II, 13-25 and III, 263 ff.- The feasts of Vota and Brumalia were old Greek and Roman customs.

208. On the 1st of March the civil new year began and there were celebrations "with indecent music and dancing".

forbidden. Races and spectacles were forbidden to take place during the week following Easter.

Other canons forbade men to take baths together with women. Those who maintained brothels were severely punished.

Canon 82 forbade the representation of Christ on icons as a "lamb" and it was laid down that Christ be represented in the human form.[209]

Canon 39 stated that the archbishop of New Justinianoupolis,[210] i.e., the archbishop of the Cypriots, "has the rights of Constantinople".[211] He should preside over the bishops of the provinces of the Hellespont and of Kyzicus and he should be the one to ordain the bishops of this region.

It was Canon 36 which aroused the ire of the Western Church. This stated that the Patriarch of Constantinople "ranks equally" with the Pope of Rome. It is to be noted that the 3rd Canon of the 2nd Ecumenical Synod (351) and the 28th Canon of the 4th Ecumenical Synod (451), which the Western Church had not accepted, are restated and confirmed.

It has been argued[212] that the confirmation of the acts of the 6th Ecumenical Synod deprived the Pope and the Patriarchs of the right to publish the acts of the Synods and that, consequently, this was the first attempt to subject the Pope and the ecclesiastical authorities to the crown. Irrespective of the fact, however, that all of the above were subject to the Emperor, there is no indication whatsoever that the Patriarchs had such rights over the acts of the Synods. These Synods were always

209. According to Grabar, *L'Iconoclasme*, p.41, Canon 82 was responsible for the appearance of Christ's image on coins.

210. See above Ch. III, 4.—Hackett, *History*, p.37 ff.

211. The meaning of this phrase has been questioned. It is beyond doubt that the Synod did not wish to equate the Archbishop with the Patriarch of Constantinople. Could there have been an error and instead of Constantinople we should read "city of Constanteia"? Constanteia was the capital and Metropolitan See of Cyprus and her rights had been defined at the Synod of Ephesus.

212. Görres, *op.cit.*

called only by the Emperor.[213] Naturally, despite the restrictions and the punishments, the customs continued to survive. The feasts of the Calends, the Vota and the Brumalia continued to take place for centuries to come,[214] even though the Church anathematized them.[215]

The final document of the Synod was signed by Justinian, by the above Patriarchs or locum-tenentes, by 211 metropolitans and bishops and by Basil of Gortynus who signed adding "representing the Synod of the Holy Church of Rome". The seats which remained vacant were those of the Pope, of the metropolitans of Salonica, of Ravenna, of Corinth and of Sardinia.

4

The minutes of the Synod were sent to the Pope to be signed. It was then that the great commotion occurred. The Pope refused to sign and, moreover, stated that he preferred death to the acceptance of these erroneous canons.[216] The Synod was characterised by some as heretical.[217] This, however, is not right. It is true that among the 102 canons there were some which were unacceptable to the Western Church, especially those referring to the confirmation (2nd Canon) of the 85 Apostolic Canons of which the Church of Rome approved only the first fifty.[218]

213. Breckenridge, *The Numismatic*, p.9.

214. Kukulés, II, 25.

215. John Chrysostomos, *Migne, P.G.* 48, p.957 ff., 50, p.561 ff.

216. *L.P.* I, p.373 ff.— Paul the Deacon, VI, 11.—Andrea Dandulo, p.102.

217. Bedae, *Chronica*, p.316, writes *"Quia aerraticae suae Synodo..."* This might have perhaps misled some historians. Bedae, however, meant the same as the writer who composed the life of Sergius for the *L.P.*, that is, not "heretical" but "erroneous". Moreover, Justinian is referred to by the writer of the *L.P.* as "orthodox" and, hence, on the basis of the reigning ideology of the time, it would be unthinkable that Justinian would agree to sign the acts of a heretical Synod.

218. It is completely unknown as to why he accepted only the first 50 canons. It has been said that he judged the other 35 to be contrary to the customs of the West. This, however, is not correct. Only a few of these canons were so. It has been also said that the canons, which were written in Greek, were originally

Others were: Canon 13 which allowed the marriage of priests, Canon 55 which allowed only the Saturday before Easter to be a day of fast and which was consistent with the Apostolic Canon 66,[219] Canon 67 concerning the blood of animals, Canon 82 which forbid the representation of Christ as a lamb.[220] But the one which was wholy unacceptable was Canon 36 which granted equal rights to the Patriarch and the Pope.[221]

Justinian sent the "magister" Sergius to arrest the two most important councillors of the Pope,[222] John, Bishop of Porto, and Boniface the Councillor, as the sources state. Justinian judged that they were the only ones responsible for the Pope not signing the acts. They were transported to Constantinople, but we lack all information concerning their subsequent fate. Since, however, there were no protests from the West, this in my opinion implies that they suffered no punishment.

Justinian then sent the Protospatharius Zacharias to Rome. The incident concerning Zacharias assumed mythical proportions. I will first give an account of how the incident is described by the Western sources and then state my views and reservations about it.

According to the Liber Pontificalis, Zacharias arrived in Italy with orders to arrest Pope Sergius and transport him to Constantinople.[223] The local guard[224] of Ravenna united with

translated into Latin by someone named Dionysius who translated only the first 50 canons and these Rome accepted.

219. Rallis and Potlis, II, 84.

220. Héfelé-Leclercq, *op.cit.*, II, 578. — Laurent, *L'Oeuvre.*

221. This is mainly supported by the western clergy. According to them Canon 36 was almost heretical because it equated the heads of the two Churches and thus abolished the primacy of Rome. Hefélé-Leclercq, III, 578. It should again be noted that this was a repetition of a canon of the 2nd and 4th Ecumenical Synods.

222. *L.P.* I, p.373 and p.378 notes 22 and 23.— for the term "Magistrianos" see above note 87.

223. *LP.* I, p.373 ff.— Paul the Deacon, VI, 11. — Bedae, p.316 ff. — Ostrogorsky, p.139.— Bréhier, *Les derniers Heraclides*, p.196. — Vasiliev, *op.cit.*, I, 297. — Duchêsne, *L'Eglise*, p.479. — Romano, *La Dominazione*, pp.323-4. — Görres, *op.cit.* — Head, *Justinian II.* — Guillou, *Régionalisme*, p.209. — Amandos, I, 337.

224. *L.P.* I, p.373. — Duchêsne in note 24, p.378 writes that the *L.P.* does not

the guard of Pentapolis (Italy) and marched against Rome. Zacharias ordered that the gates of the city be closed, but his orders were not obeyed and Zacharias sought refuge in the Lateran. The rebels believed a rumour which was circulating that the Pope had been arrested already and was on board a ship. Then they marched against the Lateran and finding the gates shut threatened to force them. Zacharias, in terror, fled into the Pope's room, hid under the bed and there...fainted. The Pope appeared in order to appease the crowds and asked the army to withdraw. The soldiers refused to do so unless Zacharias was removed, so he was then chased away[225] with scoffs and curses. This, in short, is what the Liber Pontificalis states concerning the incident. Some historians[226] maintain that Justinian wished to imitate his grandfather Constantine III (Constans) who had dispatched the patrician Theodore Calliopas, Exarch of Italy, to arrest Martin.[227] However, the two incidents are not similar because Martin was not considered as the legal Pope, since he was enthroned illegally and without the Emperor's consent.[228] Sergius' election was legal for his ordination had been confirmed by the Exarch of Italy, in accordance with Constantine IV's decree.

I believe that in this matter there has been a great

mention anything about the *Exercitus Romanus*, i.e., the army of Rome, because, though this army was well disposed towards the Pope it could not forget its allegiance to the Emperor. Nevertheless, it did not put up any resistance to the army of Ravenna when, together with other armies, it entered Rome.

225. *L.P.* I, p.374. — Bedae, pp.315-6.

226. Ostrogorsky, *op.cit.*, p.139. — Görres, p.450 — Gay, *op.cit.*, p.43. — Head, *op.cit.*, p.78.

227. See A. Stratos, III, 111 ff.

228. Martin was accused of gaining the See in an irregular and illegal way *(irregulariter et sine lege Episcopatum subripuisse)*. Mansi, X, 852. — Duchêsne, *op.cit.*, p.441. For this reason the Eastern Church never recognised Martin as a Pope. The Western Church then agreed and proceeded to a new election which resulted in the election of Eugenius as Pope (654-657). The election was confirmed and Eugenius was enthroned in August of 654 while Martin was still alive. According to one version, Martin died in September 655, according to another in April 656. — See *Migne, P.G.90*, p.430 and Peeters, *Une Vie Grecque du pape St. Martin I*, in *An.Bol.*, 51/1933.

misunderstanding. As I mentioned above, Justinian was a deeply religious person. Western sources describe him as having very good intentions towards the Church of Rome.

In general, his ecclesiastical policy, even during his second reign where he appears cruel and vindictive, was one of understanding and compromise with Rome. After insistent attempts, Justinian did manage to come to an agreement with the Western Church. These facts lead me to believe that Justinian sent Zacharias to try and convince the Pope and perhaps invite him to Constantinople,[229] as he did 15 years later with Pope Constantine. It was natural that Zacharias' arrival after the magister Sergius would arouse suspicions. Certain persons who had a stake in the matter incited the army to revolt (unfortunately, revolts are always incited by persons with interests) and to march against Rome. That it was not Zacharias' intention to arrest the Pope is proved by the fact that the army of Rome, which must have been the first to be informed, did not move. One cannot easily accept the story that a protospatharius, that is, a higher court official, or high officer of the guard, was so afraid that he fainted! I believe that we should not altogether trust these spurious accounts of the Liber Pontificalis.

We hear of no other measures on the part of Justinian concerning this matter. This is probably due to the fact that the incidents occurred shortly before his deposition.

229. Dölger, *Regesten*, No. 259. — Guillou, *op.cit.*, p.209.

CHAPTER V

INTERNAL AND FINANCIAL AFFAIRS

Justinian's policy was clearly directed against the aristocracy. His desire for majestical grandeur, which was expressed in the construction of magnificent buildings, public works, colonisation, etc., required great sums of money and an efficient system for the collection of taxes. To be sure, the people complained under the burden of heavy taxation. The reaction, however, came primarily from the wealthy classes and the aristocracy, who were asked to carry the heavier weight. It is maintained in well-informed Eastern sources that Justinian threatened the aristocracy with total extermination.[230]

1

Unfortunately, the sources provide us with no information about the public works which were undertaken during Justinian's reign. The only information we have concerns some of the buildings which he erected.

Recent historians maintain that young Justinian was jealous of the glory of Justinian the Great and wished to imitate his magnificence by constructing great monuments. Justinian built the famous Triclinon, which was used as an ante-chamber and as a hall for symposia. This hall communicated with the palace and the hippodrome.[231] He decorated this hall with golden apses and

230. Ostrogorsky, *op.cit.*, p.139. Unfortunately, he does not state which are these "well informed sources". The only relevant source which I could find was Michael the Syrian, II, 473, who writes that "he killed so many nobles that their class was almost annihilated".

231. Theophanes, p.367. — Cedrenus, p.773. — Zonaras, III, 322. — Sathas, Synopsis, p.115. — *S.O.C.*, p.257. — Janin, *Con/ple*, p.116 ff. — Ebersolt, *Le Grand Palais.* — Bury, *The Great Palace.*

mosaics.[232] Towards the north he also constructed the "Lausiakon" which communicated with the "Chrysotriclinon", built by Justin II, and the new "Triclinon".[233] Chroniclers state that he also built the palace walls but do not give any details.[234] These buildings were completed in 694. This is deduced by the fact that the chroniclers maintain they were built after Justinian's return from the war with the Arabs. Theophanes in particular mentions Justinian's 9th year of reign=694.

During the first years of Justinian's reign, six large golden slabs were constructed representing the six Ecumenical Synods. They were placed in the "Milion", that is the small four columned monument which marked the point from which distances were measured between the capital and the provinces. It has been said that these plaques were destroyed by Constantine V in 764.[235]

The chroniclers mention an interesting incident. Justinian wished to construct near the palace a "phiale"[236] and "pedestals"(?) where the Deme of the Blues would receive the Emperor. By custom, on the Monday after Easter the king would receive first the Deme of the Greens and then the Deme of the Blues. Each Deme had its "phiale" where the reception took place. The spot, however, which Justinian had chosen was already occupied by a small church "of the Virgin of the Metropolitans". Justinian asked the Patriarch to give his blessing. Yet Patriarch Callinicus replied that "when a church is founded we give our blessing, but not when it is demolished". Justinian pressed the Patriarch who them exclaimed "blessed be God who bears with everyone.." Once the Patriarch had spoken

232. Manassis, 3868-72 "the great majestic hall which was in the palace, with golden apses and mosaics he decorated, etc.". — Leo the Grammarian, p.164.

233. *S.O.C.* p.257. — Janin, *op.cit.*— Ebersolt, *op.cit.* — Bury, *op.cit.* — Paspatis, *op.cit.*

234. Theophanes, p.367.— Leo Grammarian, p.164.

235. This last information is provided by Stephen the Younger in *Migne, P.G.* Vol. 100, p.1172 ff. — See Grabar, *L'Iconoclasme Byzantin*, p.48 ff, and especially pp.55-6.

236. In those days "phiale" meant a fountain with a basin and a domed roof resting in small columns; in general, the round domed platform before the Church.

these words, the church was demolished and the "phiale" was built.[237] Justinian was overwhelmed with remorse for his act and therefore built in the district of Petrion[238] a church which bore the same name and to which later was added a monastery.[239] This is all we know about the buildings which Justinian erected.

2

As I wrote in Volume III, Byzantium had as a permanent policy the colonisation of those regions which, because of enemy raids, had been deserted. Already the cities showed signs of over-population[240] because the inhabitants from the country sought refuge there in order to avoid captivity. Many did not wish to return to their villages, which had probably been destroyed. Thus, the land remained uncultivated with disastrous effects for the economy. Apart from this factor, a general slackening in economic activities had occurred and measures had to be adopted to meet the situation.

Byzantium had never formed a nation in the sense of having a uniform ethnological composition. The need for working hands necessitated an increase in the population by immigration irrespective of the nationality of the immigrants.[241] This method of increasing the population by voluntary or forced colonisation was an easy way by which the Empire solved its demographical problem.[242]

The Arab invasions in Asia Minor during the years 663-677, and especially the last ones which resulted in the blockade of Constantinople,[243] had caused the desertion of the region of

237. Theophanes, pp.367-8. — Cedrenus, p.774. — George the Monk, p.731. — Leo the Grammarian, p.164.

238. Janin, *op.cit.*, 375, a district in the direction of the Bay of Golden Horn towards the north of the 4th hill.

239. Theophanes, p.368. — Janin, *Les Eglises*, pp.205-6.

240. Stratos, III, 180.

241. Lemerle, *Esquisse pour une Histoire Agraire*, — Charanis, *The Slavic Element*. — Iorga, *Epoque etc.*

242. Zakythinos, *The Slavs in Greece*, p.34.

243. Stratos, Vol. IV, p.20 ff.

Kyzicus and of a great part of Bithynia. As a result, the capital was left exposed from the side of Asia Minor. It was, therefore, necessary to make every effort to increase the population of these areas to make them again financially profitable and capable of providing an army to reinforce the defence of the capital[244] in cases of emergency.

For purposes of colonisation the Byzantines brought into Bithynia, an area which belonged to the Opsikion theme, the Slavs who had been captured during the expedition to Thrace and Salonica and those who had willingly joined the Byzantine army.[245] As previously written, a seal of that period has survived which the Russian historian Pancenko described and Schlumberger[246] analysed in greater detail. It belonged to the imperial delegate under whose administration the Slav settlements of Bithynia had been placed. On the obverse side the legend runs: "...from the Consuls...", there is a portrait of Justinian at a young age and the date IND (Indiction) 8. On the reverse the legend reads: "of the slaves(?) of the Sclavs (rather of the Slavs) of the PROVINCE OF BITHYNIA".

This is one of the most curious seals that has been discovered. Its dating presents great difficulties because some historians place it in the year 650, while others in the year 710. The date which is generally accepted today is 695 (8th Indiction).[247] This seal proves that Theophanes was wrong when he wrote that all the Slavs had been massacred.

Simultaneously with the attack on Constantinople, the Arabs conquered the entire region of Kyzicus which they used as a rallying point. The region was, therefore, deserted.[248] Justinian, in order to colonise this region, without taking into account his

244. Kulakovsky, *History*, Vol. III, pp.261-2.

245. Nicephorus, p.36. — Theophanes, p.364. — Ostrogosky, *op.cit.*, p.130. — Bréhier, *Vie*, p.66.— Charanis, *The Slavic Element.* — Brooks, II, 406-7. — Bury, *op.cit.*, II, 321. — Lemerle, *op.cit.*, See previous chapter, II, 1.

246. Sceau des Esclaves.

247. Ostrogorsky, *op.cit.*, p.130 and note 4.— Grégoire, *Un Edit.*— Charanis, *op.cit.* — *Ibid.*, *Ethnic Changes.* — Maricq, *Notes sur les Slaves.* — Kulakovsky, *op.cit.*

248. See Stratos, Vol. IV, Ch. II, sec. 3.

peace treaty with the Arabs, decided to transport part of the population of Cyprus to Kyzicus.[249] The settlement occurred in the 6th year of Justinian's reign, hence in 690-1. The transportation was effected before the Ecumenical Synod in Troullo, because Canon 39 recognised that the rights of the Metropolitan of Cyprus belonged to the Metropolitan of New Justinianoupolis, as the city which was built to accomodate the Cypriot colonisers had been named. The colonisation was considered as one of the reasons which led to the war with the Arabs.[250] Theophanes' information that during the transportation the Cypriots drowned or died of epidemics is, surely, not right. Had this happened there would have been no reason to build New Justinianoupolis. Moreover, some years later, after a new agreement, the Cypriots returned to Cyprus. Had they perished during the sea voyage, how could they have been repatriated?[251]

3

It is not an easy task to make a correct analysis of the internal and economic situation of that period. Sources are lacking and those in existence give such confusing accounts that we can only formulate hypotheses as to the developments.

One of the hardest issues is the agrarian policy which was then practiced in Byzantium. The great landlords formed the basis of the Roman Empire. Roman Law, as it developed, strengthened the landowning class and destroyed the class of free peasants who were reduced to serfdom.[252] During its first

249. Theophanes, p.365. — Cedrenus, p.772.— Michael the Syrian, II, 470. — *Chronicle of the Year 1234*, p.230. — Constantine Porphyrogennetus, *De* Adm. Imp. p.244. - Ostrogorsky, p.131. - Bréhier, op.cit.- Amandas, I, 336. Bury, *op.cit.* — Eickoff, *Seekrieg*, p.262, who mistakenly gives the date 692. — Hatzipsaltis, *Cyprus.* — Charanis, *The Transfer.*

250. See above Ch. III, sec. 4.

251. Jenkins in *Con. Porphyrogennetus,* De Ad. Imp., II, p.181.

252. On the basis of the studies of Zachariae von Ligenthal, Uspensky, etc. See also Vernadskij, *Sur les Origines.* — Svoronos, *Petite et Grande Exploitation.*

centuries, Byzantium followed this principle of landowning as a basis for its agrarian economy. Gradually, the increase of small landholders and the liberation of the peasant gave a new character to the agrarian structure of the Empire. Since the days of the Heracleids and the organization of the themes, it had become necessary to change the agrarian system by giving small farms to peasants who would also undertake military obligations. This institution of giving land in exchange for military service was known since ancient times. During Rome's supremacy, the borders of the Empire were given over as farms to persons who were then under the obligation to defend the borders against the enemy's attacks. The land was inheritable, but the inheritor assumed the military obligations together with the land. This old policy which assumed legal status in one of the *Nearae* (new law) of Theodosius II, and which was included in the Codex of Justinian I,[253] confirms the obligations of the border soldier *(Limitanei)* provided he owned a military farm. The application of this policy throughout the Empire facilitated local mobilisation, since it was in the interest of these people to defend their land, and boosted agrarian economy by increasing the power of the small landowners against the lords who often became a threat to the Emperor. Thus, a free peasant class was formed which contributed not only to the Empire's economy but also to its defense. The institution of themes, which necessitated the general application of the policy of military farm giving, allowed Byzantium to survive for centuries to come. The creation of this class of free peasants needed a relevant legal code. One text has survived: "Chapters pertaining to agrarian law chosen from Justinian's book". This text is one of the most important documents of the age. We find there instructions which mirror the state of the rural society, as the text deals with particular incidents from everyday life and the picture given speaks eloquently of the efforts made to improve agriculture and agricultural production.

At first, historians maintained that the agrarian laws were

253. Vasiliev, *On the Question.*

due to the Isaurians[254] (8th century). Russian historians hastened to put forth the theory that the laws should be associated with the settlement of the Slavs on Byzantine territory. For, they argued, it was their customs which influenced the development of the agrarian reform, and their laws which changed the structure of Byzantine society. This theory has been rejected. As has been rightly observed, a very short period of time elapsed between the settlement of the Slavs and the reform for the life and laws of Byzantium to be affected. Moreover, hardly anything is known about the laws (if they existed), or rather the customs of the Slavs during this period.[255] Today, two theories are advanced: 1) That the surviving text is not an official one, but a private selection which has its source in the *Corpus* of Justinian I. Incidents from daily life enriched this selection which probably dates from the end of the 7th or the beginning of the 8th century.[256] 2) That the laws should be attributed to Justinian II, in fact to the period between 692-695 when the Synod in Troullo settled the internal affairs of the Church.[257]

Irrespective of the above, and of the theory that since the text bears the phrase "from Justinian's book" and not "books" which forbids us to attribute it to Justinian I, I think that indeed the text does not concern enactments but a selection, a compilation of rules pertaining to the regulation of matters which arose in the daily life of the free peasants. Their class grew continuously as the institution of themes became more widespread.[258] This compilation possibly dates from the end of the 7th, or the beginning of the 8th century.[259]

254. Zachariae von Ligenthal, who attributes it to Leo III, or to his son Constantine V (8th century). — Mortreuil, *Histoire du Droit Byzantin*, I, 395, who atributes it to Justinian I.

255. Malafosse, *Les Lois Agraires*. — Vernadskij, *op.cit.*

256. Dölger, *Ist der Nomos georgikos*. — Karayiannopoulos, *Entstehung und Bedeutung*. — Angelov, *Genèse et dévéloppement*.

257. Vernadskij, *op.cit.* — Ostrogorsky, *op.cit*, p.90. — *Ibid.*, *Agrarian Conditions*, I, 209. — Bréhier, *Les Institutions*, p.176. — Vasiliev, *Histoire*, I, 325 ff. — Gregoire, in *Byz.* 1937, p.642.

258. Charanis, *Some Remarks*.

259. Lemerle, *Esquisse*. — Ashburner, *The Farmer's Law*, who prints the entire text together with an English translation and commentary.

It is not an easy task to describe the changes in the economy that took place during this period. The 8th century witnessed a veritable revolution in the economic structure and the taxation system of Byzantium. However, these reforms did not come about through special legislature. Whether or not such laws existed, the root of these reforms should be sought in the economical conditions which were created through the years in the Empire. The trade of gold became increasingly difficult for Byzantium after the loss of the Eastern Provinces and partial cut off from the routes for the importation of gold.[260] The economic situation was aggravated when the Arabs ceased paying the peace tax and war, which had not occurred between the Byzantines and the Arabs for so many years, was resumed. In contrast, the financial situation had improved greatly in the Arab Empire, especially from the time when Abd al-Malik imposed the capital tax on Christian clergymen and introduced heavy taxation on church property. In order to meet these financial obligations the Church and the clergy were forced to unearth their hidden treasures and to sell them, thus increasing the Arab's stock of gold and silver.

It was during this time that a change in the system of taxation occurred in Byzantium. Before, there was the poll tax (capitatio) and the land tax (iugatio) which tied the peasant to the earth. The poll tax was replaced by the "hearth" tax which was levied on every family[261] and not on single persons. This tax was entirely different from the new land tax, the *"synoni"*, and the two taxes could not be collected simultaneously anymore.[262] Financial stress led the administration to extend taxation to Constantinople as well, and this increased the feeling of

260. Lombard, *L'Or Musulman*, p.8 ff.

261. Tax which was levied on every family "hearth".

262. See relevant studies: Ostrogorsky, *Das Teuersystem im Byzantischen Altertum und Mittelalter*, in *Byz.* VI 1931. — *Ibid.*, *Über die Vermeintliche Reformatigkeit der Isaurer*, in B.Z. XXX/1929-30. — Setton, *On the importance of Land Tenure and Agrarian Taxation in the Byzantine Empire*, American Journal of Philology, LXXIV1953. — Lot, *L'Impot Foncier*, p.56 ff. — Monnier, *Etudes du Droit Byzantin.*

dissatisfaction which the people were already experiencing.[263]

One of the most interesting phenomena of this period is the change in the appearance and minting of coins. The minting of coins had shown an improvement since the days of Constantine IV; during the reign of Justinian, however, there was a marked artistic improvement.[264] Justinian is not represented on the coins in military dress and breastplate as were the Emperors before him. In the early years he is shown wearing a mantle and a crown over which there is a small cross. On the reverse side there is a big cross standing on the top of three steps and the usual inscription VICTORIA AVGU (victory of Augustus). During the years 685-687 Justinian is shown without a beard which appears only in later images. As written previously, Canon 82 of the Synod in Troullo forbade the representation of Christ in the form of a "lamb" and instituted his human representation. The image of Christ began then to appear on coins for the first time. On those minted between 692-695, we see on the one side the image of Christ in long hair, his right hand lifted as if blessing, his left holding the Gospel and at the back of his head a small cross. On the other side stands Justinian with a small beard, wearing the striped imperial robes,[265] a crown with a cross on his head and a big cross on three steps in his hand. The inscription now reads: "SERVUS CHRISTI" (servant of Christ).[266]

Justinian was the first Emperor to allow the representation of Christ on coins. After his fall from power the image disappears and we only find it again in the reign of Michael III.[267]

The hexagramme, which was a silver coin of 6.11 to 6.82 grammes, continued to be minted in Justinian's time, but was gradually abandoned and only commemorative medals were

263. Bratianu, *La fin du Régime.* — Monnier, *op.cit.*

264. Bellinger, *The Gold Coinage.*

265. Loros = striped garment worn by the consuls and emperors.

266. Grabar, *L'Iconoclasme Byzantin,* p.36 ff. — *Ibid., L'Empereur.* — Grierson, *Catalogue of the Byzantine Coins,* II, 568 ff. — Morrison, *Monnaies Byzanties,* I, 396. — Breckenridge, *The Numismatic,* p.28 ff. — Wroth, *Catalogue,* II, 330 ff. — Ostrogorsky, *op.cit.* p.138.

267. Grabar, *L'Empereur,* p.19 ff — Breckenridge, *op.cit.*

cast in exceptional circumstances.[268] Bronze coins were minted in abundance and they were quite heavy, 10.76 to 17.06 grammes.

During the same period, various reforms in administration took place, especially in the sectors concerned with finances. Sources do not help us determine the exact date of these reforms. The change in titles of several officials informs us of these changes. In the past the imperial estate was administered by the *Comes rei Privatum*. With time, the title changed into that of *Sacellarius*. The title is derived from the word "sakellion" which refers to the Emperor's private property.[269] However, as this property also formed the imperial treasury, the balance of which fed the *Fiscus*, that is the public treasury, the position of Sacellarius became very important during the seventh century. The person occupying this position was in daily contact with the Emperor and thus the position was one of the highest in the hierarchy. The first known Sacellarius was Theodore Trithourios. Heraclius, in 636, appointed him general of the Byzantine army, but he was defeated and killed in the battle of Yarmuk.[270] Nicephorus calls him treasurer of the imperial finances. The imperial treasurers were at first eunuchs.[271]

Public finances (Fiscus) which concerned the collection of taxes were administered by the *Comes Sacrarum Largitionum*. This title disappeared in the 7th century and was replaced by that of the "*Logothetes* of the general treasury". Often we find it as "general Logothete" or simply "the general".[272]

This title first appeared during the reign of Justinian II.[273] The title as such was in use before. Constantine Lardis who was murdered by Phocas in 602 was Logothete of the Emperor

268. *Grieson, The Monetary Reforms.* — Morrisson, *op.cit.* I, 400

269. Bury, *op.cit.*, II, 414.

270. Theophanes, p.337 ff.

271. Yannopoulos, P., *The Imperial Court in Byzantium during the 7th Century*, in E.E.B.S. Vol. 57/1969-70, p.116.

272. Bréhier, *Les Institutions*, pp.257-8. — Bury, *The Imperial Administrative System*, p.86. — Monnier, *op.cit.*

273. Nicephorus, p.37 "public accountant whom the people called general logothetes". — Theophanes, p.367 "of the general accountancy".

Mauricius; Theodosius the patrician was also Logothete in 626.[274] However, we ignore the precise meaning which the title had in those days. Subsequently, the term came to mean the "Logothete of the Dromos".[275]

Justinian had entrusted the administration of finances to the Sacellarius Stephanos, a eunuch from Persia.[276] Byzantine sources describe him as "bloodthirsty and ferocious". He was given the title of "Sacellarius" and enjoyed great power. It is stated that he tortured the overseers of works not only by lashing, but by stoning as well. The punishments which he inflicted were dreadful. As general Logothete Justinian appointed a certain Theodotos, who was a monk (Nicephorus, Zonaras), or an abbot (Theophanes) of a monastery "which lies towards Thrace on the banks of the strait named Poros..." (I suppose he means the west bank of Bosporus). Theodotos is described as being more wicked than the eunuch Stephanos, more brutal and bloodthirsty. When it came to the collection of taxes he would not hesitate to torture anyone, even the nobles.[277] No obstacle stood in his way. To achieve his purpose he would even hang people and light fires under their feet to burn and suffocate them. Many people died from the tortures which he inflicted. Others were imprisoned and left to rot in jail. Justinian was indifferent to the methods employed for the collection of money which he needed for his buildings and public works. However, this manner of tax collecting, the cruelty, tortures and injustices practiced by his officials roused the hatred of people against his person, especially of the upper classes. For it was the aristocracy that suffered more from the

274. *Chronicon Paschale*, pp.694, 721.

275. Bury, *The Imperial*, p.91 ff.

276. Theophanes, p.367. —Nicephorus, p.37. —Zonaras, III, 325 "he descended from barbarians".

277. Theophanes, "many nobles and notables, not only from among the officials, but from the leading citizens also, randomly and without any excuse...". — Cedrenus, pp.773-4.

brutal practices and the rapaciousness of Stephanos and Theodotos.[278]

No mention is made of an extention of the institution of themes during this period. A number of contemporary historians maintain that the "theme of Hellas" was founded in those days. Perhaps this hypothesis stems from the fact that we first come upon a reference to the "general of Hellas" in 695. However, as I state in Volume III,[279] this theme was founded in 661-2 by Constantine III (Constans) when he went to Greece in order to organise the region against the possible danger of an attack from the Arabian fleet.

278. Ostrogorsky, *op.cit.*, p.139. — Diehl, *Le monde oriental*, p.244. — Paparigopoulos, *History*, III, 262. — I do not know why Görres in *Justinian* mentions Stephanos as a famous economist. Perhaps the reforms in the taxation system and in agrarian policy which, as I have written, are attributed to Justinian, may have led him to this conclusion.

279. See Vol. III of this history, pp.206 ff.

CHAPTER VI

REVOLUTION AND EXILE OF JUSTINIAN

The events concerning the revolution and deposition of Justinian present great complications especially if one wishes to give the narrative a logical basis. Chroniclers provide us with such a confused picture of the events, which is not free even of prophecies, that it becomes impossible to arrive at conclusions which are with some certainty related to fact. Unfortunately, this revolution has not been the subject of serious studies, hence the majority of our contemporary historians, in an attempt not to diverge from the sources, arrive at easy solutions which do not give a precise picture of the events.

All sources date to some time after the events. However, as I have already stated, they probably rely on information provided by persons who had experienced the revolution, but whose chronicles have not survived.

The sources that we possess state that the hatred of the people against Justinian kept on mounting. Great numbers had been arrested and were rotting in prison.[280] One day, in 695, the rumour circulated that Justinian had ordered the patrician and general Stephanos, who was nicknamed "the red"[281] to exterminate the Deme of Constantinople, starting with the Patriarch.[282] This information, however, which is accepted as true by some contemporary historians, seems unbelievable. Much as one may rely on these sources and agree that Justinian was brutal and insane, it is not easy to believe that in fact he ordered the extermination of the entire population of Constantinople! Moreover, when Theophanes refers to "the

280. Theophanes, p.369 "of the many men who were condemned... some for six, others for eight years imprisoned...". — Zonaras, III, 323.

281. He may have been red-haired.

282. Theophanes, p.368. — Cedrenus, p.774.

Deme" it is almost certain that what he means is the officials of the Deme of the Blues, for, it was there that the revolution started. The wealthier classes and the great landowners who suffered most from Justinian's repressive measures belonged to this Deme. This is the alternative hypothesis advanced by those historians who do not accept the catholicity of this brutal order.[283]

Who was this patrician and general by the name of Stephanos? No reference to his person is to be found. However, on the basis of the events, I think we can assume that he was a person in Justinian's confidence who held an important position in Constantinople. Evidently, he must have been the prefect of Constantinople, i.e., the governor of the capital.[284]

The famous general Leontius was held in prison. Leontius had in the past been general of the Anatolikon theme and had invaded Armenia and Caucasus.[285] He had fallen into disfavour and had been condemned to imprisonment three years before the events.[286] The reasons for this condemnation are not known. However, as the period during which he fell into disfavour coincides with the defeat at Sebastoupolis, one may surmise that the responsibility was placed on him and he had to bear the consequences.[287] Anyway, Leontius was released and was appointed "suddenly", as Theophanes writes, general of the theme of Hellas. The ships for his transportation, three dromons as the sources state, were ready in the port of the Sophiae. On board was an army and "chariots". On the night before the ships sailed, Leontius was visited by his friends "Paul the Monk, of the ones of Callistratos" and "the astronomer Gregory from

283. Bury, *op.cit.*, II, 329. — Brooks, in *C.M.H*, II, 409. — Levtchenko, *The Blues*, I (XXVI) 182.

284. Anastasius the Librarian, who translated Theophanes into Latin, writes "patricio et Praetori..." It is possible that Anastasius was working from another manuscript of Theophanes in which Stephanos was called "patrician and praetor".

285. See Ch.III, sec. 2

286. Theophanes, p.368. — Nicephorus, pp.37-8. — Leo the Grammarian, p.165. — Zonaras, III, 323.

287. Bury, *op.cit.* II, 328.

Cappadoceia... monk and abbot of Floros...".[288] Gregory was to be appointed "Cleisourarch" shortly after. These friends used to visit him often in prison and had prophesied that he would become king. Leontius complained to them that their prophecies had come to nothing for he was in danger now of losing his life: "at any moment death may strike at me from behind..."[289] Paul and Gregory advised him not to lose heart and to follow their instructions and act instantly "for the prophecy to be fulfilled".[290] Leontius heard their advice "and together with his people and whatever arms they had (I presume he disembarked the soldiers who were to follow him to the theme of Hellas as well as the chariots), arrived at the "Praetorium" as quietly as possible".[291] There, he announced that he had come on the king's orders to release some of the detainees. When the commander[292] was informed of this, he ran and opened the gates. Leontius then ordered that he be arrested, beaten and that his "hands and feet" be tied. Leontius threw open the cells and liberated the prisoners, the majority of whom were officers who had been in jail for six or eight years. He armed them and together they came into the "Forum" (I presume a square before the Praetorium). They then began to call on the Christians to

288. According to the patridographers (*S.O.C.* p.269 and *Migne, P.G.* vo.157, pp. 600 ff.) those of Floros and Callistratos were built by two brothers in the years of Constantine the Great and after their death were turned into monasteries. Patriarch Paul resided there after his resignation. According to Gedeon they were built by St. Floros who was a contemporary of Tiberius and Mauricius. See also Vyzantios, I, 298. In *Les Eglises*, Janin maintains that it was built around the middle of the 6th century, on the European side of Bosporus, pp.285, 511 ff.

289. I confess I cannot understand why he was "now" afraid of death. If they had in mind to kill him wouldn't that have been much easier while he was in prison?

290. Theophanes, p.269. — Nicephorus, p.38.

291. This phrase seems rather strange. How could a division of the army disembark together with chariots and horses in "absolute silence"? No one realised what was happening?

292. This sentence too seems curious. It is possible that the sources mean the Eparch, i.e., the Governor, unless by this term they designated the vice governor, i.e., the person who governed in the absence of the Eparch. At any rate, Cedrenus (p.775) who usually follows Theophaes writes "of the Eparch'.

assemble before the Church of St. Sophia.[293] Leontius sent messengers to all the districts to ask the people to assemble before the church. He himself marched together with the most famous of the imprisoned officers to the Patriarchate where he found the Patriarch in dismay because of the order which the Emperor had given to the patrician Stephanos "the red one". Leontius convinced the Patriarch to join him and to march with the crowd to the church.

An enormous crowd began to gather before the baptistery of St. Sophia where the Patriarch and Leontius had hastened. The crowd cursed Justinian whilst the Patriarch was shouting "this day was created by God". The populace crowded into the Hippodrome where Leontius was proclaimed king.[294]

At daybreak they brought Justinian into the Hippodrome. The people shouted and demanded that he be put to death. Leontius, however, because of the love and gratitude which he bore towards Constantine IV, Justinian's father,[295] refused to obey the people's desire and ordered that Justinian's "nose and tongue be mutilated".[296] To be sure, the punishment was harsh but less so than death since it allowed the punished person to live in peace without, however, having anymore claims to office. I tend to think that words often prove harsher than actions. We know that Justinian was capable of speech and after "the mutilation of his tongue" exceptionally talkative. He replaced the part of his nose that had been cut by a golden cast and thus managed to hide his deformity.[297]

Justinian was placed on board a ship and was transported to Cherson of Crimea.

293. Theophanes, p.369. — Nicephorus, p.38. — Zonaras, III, 323. — Leo the Grammarian, p.165.

294. Glykas, p.520. Leontius the patrician led a revolt and was king proclaimed during the night by the Deme of the Blues. — Bar Hebraeus, *Chron.Syriacum*, p.118 writes that the patricians deposed Justinian. — George the Monk (p.731) writes as well that Leontius was proclaimed king by the Deme of the Blues. — Michael the Syrian, *op.cit.*

295. Nicephorus, p.38-9. —Brooks, in *C.M.H.*, II, 409.

296. All Byzantine chroniclers agree.

297. *L.P. Ecclesiae Ravennatis*, p.367.

The people arrested the monk and general logothete Theodotus, as well as Stephanos the "sacellarius", the two most hated officials in the Empire, tied their limbs and dragged them through the great avenue known as the "Messe" to the Forum (square) of Voos where they were burnt to death.[298] This occurred in spite of Leontius' reservations.[299]

This is how the chroniclers describe the revolution against Justinian and the proclamation of Leontius as king. There are, of course, many questions which of necessity will remain unanswered given the present state of the sources. If one rids the narrative of prophecies and miracles, which were customary in the stories of the Byzantines, one still needs to ask: 1) How was it possible for a man who on the previous day was still in prison to lead with such ease a revolution? 2) How come Justinian made no effort to suppress the revolution? 3) How did it happen that during that night the powerful imperial guards, who were the fear and terror of Constantinople, did not offer any resistance?

In the first place it is nowhere mentioned that Leontius was crowned as a king but only that he was "proclaimed".[300] Since the Patriarch took part in the revolution and followed Leontius to St. Sophia,[301] it would have been only too easy to perform the coronation that very night. I presume that the notables of the Empire, who suffered most from Justinian's administration, had began to organise the conspiracy. This becomes evident from the

298. Forum of Voos (Bull). A square in Constantinople, today Aksarai. A bronze statue stood there which represented the head of a bull. The square was used for the burning of criminals and it appears that many Christians were put to death there. It has been said that Heraclius melted this large statue to produce new bronze coins in 616-620 (*S.O.C*, pp.48 and 180). Janin disagrees in *Constantinople Byzantine*, pp.74 and 306, on this last point.

299. Nicephorus, p.39 "against the king's will".

300. Christophilopoulou, *Election, Proclamation*, pp.74-5. This is not altogether precise. In the manuscript 11376 (see Cumont, *Chroniques*) it is mentioned that Leontius was crowned by the Patriarch Callinicus. There is, however, an ambiguity in all this matter.

301. Diehl, *Le Monde Oriental*, p.245. —Andrea Dandulo, *Chronicon*, p.102.

account given by some chroniclers[302] who state that the Deme of the Blues, to which belonged the moneyed classes, supported it. I suppose that they took advantage of the great hatred which the people felt for the administration,[303] of the indignation of the friends and relatives of all those who had been arrested and were being tortured by the sacellarius, of the Patriarch's[304] strong reaction to this state of affairs (though I do not believe that an order was issued that he be killed) and, especially, of Leontius' release and appointment as general of the theme and subsequent organisation of the army for his new post; these considerations led the conspirators to immediate action. The whole affair shows good organisation, coordination and planning. It does not give the impression of having occurred spontaneously and at the spur of the moment.

It is probable that Justinian was betrayed by his courtiers whom he considered faithful, but who, nevertheless, had joined the conspirators. His powerful guard offered no resistance. Only by accepting that Justinian was betrayed can we explain the passivity and absence of resistance to the rebels. It is rightly maintained that Justinian was abandoned by everyone.[305] This sudden change in the state of affairs which occurred in 695 provoked great unrest, calamities and revolts which lasted for more than twenty years.[306]

302. George the Monk, p.731. —Glykas, p.520. —Michael the Syrian, II, 473. —Levtchenko, *The Blues and the Greens*, pp.19-20. —Maricq, *La Durée du Regime*. —*Christophilopoulou, op.cit.*, p.74. —Brooks, in *C.M.H.* II, 409.

303. I mention "the Administration" and not "Justinian" because many persons remained faithful to him and helped him regain his throne.

304. Amandos, *History*, I, 338. —Bréhier, *Les Derniers*, p.198.

305. Diehl, *op.cit.* p.245.

306. Ostrogorsky, *A History*, p.140.

CHAPTER VII

LEONTIUS

Very little is known about Leontius, the general who deposed Justinian and succeeded him on the throne.

1

The first question in need of an answer concerns the true name of this man. Byzantine and Eastern chroniclers refer to him as Leontius;[307] Western chroniclers refer to him as Leo.[308] This difference has raised many issues, especially since no coins have been found bearing the name Leontius. Given the fact that he reigned for three years, it seems very unlikely that no such coins were minted. It has been maintained that as soon as he assumed the throne his name was shortened to Leo.[309] However, it is quite possible that his official name was that of Leo since his coins bear this name. As is well known, coins always bore the official name of the Emperor. For example, all the coins of Constantine III bear this name and not that of Constans which the chroniclers attributed to him and which easily has been accepted by our modern historians. Coins, I repeat, always bore the official and not the familiar name of the Emperor. The view that Leontius' name was shortened because this was customary in the 6th and 7th centuries cannot be accepted. We have no proof on which to base such an opinion.

307. Theophanes, p.369. —Nicephorus, p.37. —George the Monk, p.731. —Sathas, *Synopsis*, p.115. —Michael the Syrian, II, 473. —Leo the Grammarian, p.165. —*Chronicon of the year 1234*, p.231. —Zonaras, III, 323 and others.

308. *L.P.* I, 385. —Bedae, p.316. —Andrea Dandulo, p.102, who writes "Leo who is also named Leontius". —Paul the Deacon, VI, 12. —*Isidoriana Continuationes*, p.347. —*Gesta Epis. Neapol.* p.34

309. Lafranchi, *La Numismatica.* — Kent, *The Mystery of Leontius II.*

Leontius, then, or Leo came from a family of patricians whose descent was from Isauria.[310] He was a patrician, a very good general and served in this capacity in the Anatolikon theme.

Chroniclers state that he reigned for three years, yet the month of his coronation is unknown. Sources inform us that this took place in the autumn of 695, therefore we accept today as the period of his reign the years 695-698. However, some sources state that he was crowned in 696.[311]

Not much is known about his character. Though a good general, he was often unfortunate in his campaigns (see previous chapter). In the few years of his reign, nothing of special importance happened — unless we are ignorant of the facts due to a complete lack of sources concerning his reign. Until a short time ago no coins had been found of his period. Lafranchi maintained that the coins of this Emperor should be sought among those which were minted between 695-720.[312] None of these, though, bear the name of Leontius. However, as Kent[313] has convincingly argued, all Latin sources, which unfailingly refer to the official name of the Emperors, use the name Leo for this king. The iconography of coins may help us arrive at a solution. The two kings Leontius and Leo III are two distinct persons and their portraits bear no resemblance whatsoever. The coins do bear similarities with those which were minted in the reign of Justinian II, though the image of Christ does not appear anymore on them.[314]

Leontius reigned for approximately three years.[315] Syrian

310. Nicephorus, p.37. A mountainous region on the north side of Taurus, between Lycaonia, Pisidia and Cilicia.

311. Michael the Syrian, II, 473, Greek year 1007 = 696, or 77th of the Arabs: 10.4.96-29.3.97. — Bar Hebraeus, p.104. — *Chronicon of the year 1234*, p.231. — Andrea Dandulo, p.102.

312. Lafranchi, *La Numismatica di Leonzio II.*

313. Kent, *The Mystery of Leontius II.*

314. Grierson, *Catalogue of the Byzantine Coins*, II, 610.

315. Theophanes, p.369. — Cedrenus, p.776. — George the Monk, p.731. — *Chronicon of the year 846*, p.175. — *Chronicon of the year 1234*, p.231. — *Isidoriana Cont.*, p.347. — Bedae, p.316. — A. Dandulo, p.116. — Paul the Deacon, VI, 12.

sources describe him as a prudent man and it seems that in the first year of his reign there was peace and quiet in Byzantium.[316]

2

Soon, however, peace was disrupted and hostilities between the Byzantines and the Arabs began. It is difficult to give a proper account of these campaigns. The sources from different periods abound in contradictions and conflicting repetitions.

From the sources we gather that in the 77th year of the Hegira (10.4.696 - 29.3.697), or in 1007 (696-7) by the chronology of the Greeks, or in 6189 (697-8) by the chronology of the Byzantines, certainly during the 2nd year of Leontius' reign, i.e., in the summer of 697, Walid ben Abd al-Malik invaded the region of Meletene and took many captives. Chroniclers agree[317] as to the invasion and the date in which it took place.[317] Another source[318] informs us that in the same year the Greeks attacked Antioch but were defeated. I believe that this information does not differ from that which concerns the year 695 or 75th of the Hegira. What has been written[319] about the appointment of Sbad Bagratuni as governor of Armenia by Leontius in this same year is also an error. On the contrary, Sbad at this time was fighting against the Byzantines and had managed to get on his side the greatest part of Armenia, as I have already argued in Chapter II, section 2.

In the same year, Sergius of Varnoukios, as Theophanes writes, who was a patrician and governor of Lazica, revolted against the Byzantines and turned his region over to the

316. *Chronicon of the year 1234.* — Michael the Syrian. — Grierson, *op.cit.* — Bury, *op.cit.* II, 352-3.

317. Theophanes, p.370. — Cedrenus, p.776. — Eliae Nisibeni, pp.73-4. — Baethgen, on the basis of the Arab chronicle for the year 77th. — Tabari, II, 1033. — Athir, IV, 361. — Yakubi, II, 337. — Brooks, *The Arabs in Asia Minor*, p.190. — Wellhausen, *Die Kämpfe der Araber*, pp.432-3.

318. Brooks, *op.cit.*,— *Ibid.*, *A Syriac Chronicle*, pp.580-1. — Wellhausen, *op.cit.*

319. Grousset, *Histoire de l'Armenie*, p.309, who unfortunately confuses all the dates.

Arabs.[320] The reasons for this action are unknown.

The most important campaigns took place in Africa where peace reigned for many years after the defeat and death of Zuhayr ibn Kais. As written in Chapter III, Abd al-Malik had appointed as governor of Ifrikya Hassan ibn Numan, who stayed in Barca for many years,[321] because the Caliph, busy as he was with the war against the Byzantines and with internal upheavals, was not in a position to assist him with reinforcements. As soon as he prevailed in the Arab dominion and emerged victorious from his war with the Byzantines, the Caliph sent to Hassan a force of 40,000 men and ordered him to recapture Africa.

It is truly impossible to give a factual account of this campaign. Chroniclers disagree in the matter of chronology and, what is worse, not only the Syrians and Byzantines provide us with contradictory dates, but the Arab chroniclers disagree between themselves, each proposing a different date based on information particular to each. In my attempt to give an account of the events, I shall rely on the Byzantine chroniclers who, in spite of what is maintained, seem to be more positive in their knowledge of the events which took place during this period.

Hassan, who headed the greatest army ever to undertake a campaign in Africa (on this point the Arab chroniclers are in agreement), started from Barca with an army of 40,000 men in the 76th year of the Hegira (21.4.695 - 9.4.696) and advancing swiftly occupied Kairouan.[322] I believe that the correct chronology of Hassan's invasion of Africa and of the occupation of Kairouan[323] is 695-6. The other chronologies given are either

320. Theophanes, p.370. —Cedrenus, however, without "of Varnoukios" p.776.

321. El-Bekri, p.23. He writes that he assumed his duties in July-August 687.

322. Theophanes gives us a general date for all the events which occurred in Africa. Eliae Nisibeni writes that Hassan entered in the year 74th. —Ibn Khaldun mentions the 69th, year =688-9. Noweiri gives three dates: the 69th the 74th and the 78th=697-8. The Arabs Chronicle (Baethgen) mentions the 87th year=697-8. Kairouani, pp.52-3, the 76th or 77th. —Al Athir, the 67th and the 74th. —Ibn Adhari, pp.24-5, the 78th. —Al-Maliki, the 69th and the 78th. —Al Hakam, II, 71, the 74th. —Baladhuri mentions no date.

323. Bury accepts the year 697, II. 353.

erroneous, or in all probability concern other campaigns.

Hassan restored order in Kairouan and proceeding by the coastal route occupied a number of towns situated by the sea.[324] Finally, he arrived before Carthage which was one of the best fortified cities of the Empire. This is where our difficulties begin. Tradition has it[325] that Hassan lay siege to Carthage, that the Exarch (whose name is not mentioned) came out with his army and waged battle before the city walls, but was forced to retreat back into the city, whereupon the Arabs, after a violent attack, took possession of Carthage and killed many of its citizens. Many managed to escape and sought refuge in Sicily and Spain.[326] When did the occupation of Carthage take place? Byzantine chroniclers maintain it was in the year 697-8.[327] The Arab chroniclers propose entirely different dates.[328]

A question arises as to the veracity of the Exarch's course of action. Hassan had a very powerful army, as 40,000 men was considered in those days a very great force. The military forces of Byzantine Africa, as I have previously stated, were very limited. The Exarch could not have under his command an army numbering more than ten to fifteen thousand men for the defense of the city. The Berbers may have sent some reinforcements; however, they themselves were faced with problems. Hence, why did the Exarch decide to come out of the walls with his army and wage battle in the open field? I tend to believe that this account is a product of the imagination of the Arabs. It is more probable that Hassan, after having destroyed the aqueduct,[329] took Carthage by assault.

After his victory Hassan placed a garrison in the ruined city

324. Diehl, *L'Afrique*, pp.582-3. —Marcais, *La Berberie*, p.34-5.

325. Ibn Adhari, p.25. —Kairouani, pp.52-3. —Ubayd Allah, p.40. —Al-Hakam, II, 71. —Al-Maliki, p.143. —Diehl, *op.cit.*, p.582. —G. Marcais, *op.cit.*, pp.34-5.

326. Ibn Khaldun, p.213. All Arab chroniclers write approximately the same. —Wellhausen, *Die Kämpfe*, p.435. — Diehl, *op.cit.*, p.583.

327. Theophanes, p.370, 3rd year of Leontius. 697-8. — Zonaras, III, 324. — Nicephorus, p.39. — Sathas, *Synopsis*, p.115.

328. Al-Athir, 74th year, Al-Hakam, 73rd, Noweiri, the same, etc. For the dates given see Caetani, *Chronographia*, p.940.

329. Kairouani, p.35.

and having been informed that some survivors of the Byzantine garrison had not boarded the ships but had taken refuge in certain towns, decided to march against them.

According to the Arab chroniclers the Greeks had sought refuge in Bizerta and in Caftura (Satfurah).[330] Hassan attacked them and overcame them. Those who survived escaped to the fortified town of Begga[331] west of Carthage, while the Berbers sought refuge in Bône.[332]

When news of the defeat and occupation of Carthage reached Constantinople there was great upheaval. Leontius hastened to gather a fleet, for there was no Byzantine fleet in Africa capable of confronting the Arabs, and the Sicilian fleet which Constantine III (Constans) had organized with no little effort precisely for this purpose after the revolution of 668 had been destroyed,[333] or remnants of it had returned to their base. Thus, the policy of an Emperor who had realised that only the presence of a strong fleet in Sicily could stop the Arabs from advancing and overruning Africa[334] had come to a sad end.

Theophanes and all the Byzantine chroniclers write that Leontius dispatched "all the roman ships"; this, however, is not accurate because soon after this fleet proved weaker than the Arabian. In charge of the fleet and the army Leontius placed John the Patrician, "an able and active man".[335]

John, whose forces greatly surpassed those of the Arabs, attacked with great violence, broke the chains which guarded the port and overran Carthage. He destroyed the garrison and then began to liberate the forts of Africa, where he placed Byzantine

330. Al-Maliki, p.143. — Ibn Adhari, ed. Fagnan. — Yakut, 3.387. — Yakubi, II, 331. — Wellhausen, p.435. — Caetani, p.940. — Talbi, *Hassan.*

331. Contempory town of Tunisia, Beza. It was built on the ruins of the ancient Byzantine fortified town Begga. — Fournel, I, 212-3.

332. Wellhausen, *op.cit.* — Mercier, III, 213.

333. The fleet which had not taken part in the insurrection escaped to Asia Minor (see Vol. IV, p.9 ff).

334. Bury, *The Naval Policy,* p.25

335. Nicephorus, p.39. — Theophanes, p.370. — George the Monk, p.732. — Zonaras, III, 324. — Leo the Grammarian, p.166. — Sathas, *Synopsis,* p.115. — A. Dandulo, p.107.

guards. He then returned to Carthage where he spent the winter awaiting orders.

These events must have occurred in all probability towards the end of 697, or 78th year of the Hegira. This chronology approximates to the one given by many Arab chroniclers as far as the events in Carthage are concerned.[336]

Immediately the question arises: What was Hassan doing all this time and where was his powerful army? The accounts given by the Arab chroniclers are so confused and their dates so unrealistic that it is impossible to rely safely on them for conclusions.

Hassan, after his Carthaginian victory, marched against the Berbers of Aures, (according to Procopius, mountains of Aurasius), where "Kahena" or "Kahina"[337] had been proclaimed queen of the tribe. Hassan stopped near the fort of Beggana where the Byzantines lay entrenched. Then Kahina, who had assembled a great army, came down from the mountains and near the river Meskigiana,[338] or Nini,[339] which lies 8-9 kilometres south east of Meggana (Beghayya), gave battle with the Arabs and routed them. Hassan was forced to retreat and was pursued to Gabés, but had to flee from there too until he arrived with what was left of his army at Barca. From Barca he sent message to Abd al-Malik asking for reinforcements.

I will not discuss or even mention the dates provided by the Arab chroniclers. According to Fagnan the chronology concerning the campaigns of Hassan as given by the Arab

336. Ibn Adhari. — Al-Maliki. — Ostrogorsky, *op.cit.*, p.141. — Diehl, *op.cit.*, p.583. — Bury, *op.cit.*, II, 352-3. — Wellhausen, *op.cit.*, 435. —Marçais, *op.cit.*, pp.34-5. —Bréhier, *op.cit.*, p.69. —Brooks, in *C.M.H.*, II, 410. —Audollent, p.140.

337. Her name was Dihya, a noble woman from the Berber tribe of the Djerahoua which usually gave to the Berbers their kings and leaders, who was descended from El-Abther. Ibn Khaldoun, pp.213-4. Kahena or Kahina means prophetess.

338. Ibn Adhari, p.27. —Ibn Khaldoun, I, 213. —Dozy corrects to Meklata, but Fagnan insists on the first name.

339. Noweiri. Ubayd Allah writes *Wadi Takda* while Ibn Khaldoun *Miskiana*. See also Diehl, *op.cit.* —Caetani, p.940.

chroniclers cannot be accepted for it is neither clear nor accurate and abounds in contradictions. It is noteworthy that the Byzantine chroniclers make no mention of these events; as for the Syrian chroniclers the only source I could trace was that of Eliae Nisibeni.[340] The only logical date, which is accepted by most contemporary historians, is that which places the events at the end of 697. This also helps to explain the reason at why the Arabs did not encounter the Byzantines in their campaign to recapture Carthage. Not only had the Arabs been defeated by the Berbers, who had received the assistance of the small Byzantine garrisons of the region, but they were far away as well, in Barca, without any forces and hence incapable of undertaking any action.

If one were to continue the narrative on the basis of the Arabian accounts, it would assume the form of a romance. I shall, therefore, continue by following the writings of the Byzantines.

Theophanes (p. 370) states that the chief councellor of the Arabs (I suppose he means the Caliph, for Nicephorus writes "the king of the Saracens", however I cannot imagine why he uses this title), sent a much more powerful fleet, etc. It appears that the Caliph answered Hassan's pleas by sending great reinforcements and orders that he recapture Carthage. John, who was confronted with a much more powerful enemy force, managed to get out of the port and sail towards Byzantium in order to ask for reinforcements.[341] According to the Byzantines this occurred in the year 6190=698.[342] Hassan then speedily destroyed what remained of the walls of this deserted city.[343] Afterwards, he recaptured all the cities which John had conquered.[344] I believe that this is a more precise account of the

340. Eliae Nisibeni, p.75, who relies on Khuwarazmi only for the final victory of the Arabs over Kahina which took place many years after.

341. Zonaras, III, 324. —Nicephorus, p.39. —Sathas, *Synopsis*, p.115. —Leo the Grammarian, p.166. According to Theophanes "John and his fleet left of the port after engaging in battle".

342. Wellhausen, p.435. —Diehl, *op.cit.*, p.584.

343. Al-Maliki, p.147. —Ubayd Allah, pp.24-5. —Bréhier, *op.cit.*, p.69.

344. Nicephorus, p.39.

events. What is curious is that the Arab chroniclers mention only one conquest of Carthage. It is possible that they wished to conceal the recapturing of the city by the Byzantines, though all the Arabs mention their defeat by the queen Kahena.

According to the Arabs,[345] once defeated by Kahena Hassan escaped to Barca. He stayed there for five years and built a fortress known as Kzar Hassan. When reinforcements came from Abd al-Malik, Hassan decided to act. In the meantime, Kahena had ordered that all towns, forests and plants be burnt so as to create a barren expanse that would prevent the Arabs from advancing.[346] In spite of this, and with assistance of treason Hassan advanced most swiftly. It has been said that he was assisted by many Berber tribes who had turned against Kahena because of the destruction of the land which she had ordered. After a bloody battle, Hassan managed to overcome the Berbers and to kill Kahena.[347]

The Arabs state that Carthage was captured after Hassan's victory and the destruction of Kahena. Weil, quite mistakenly, accepts this version. However, this presents problems with chronology. If Hassan was in Barca for five years, then he couldn't have recaptured Carthage before Leontius' dethronement. One may not agree with the Arabs about the number of years spent in Barca in which case after his victory over Kahena Hassan may have attacked and recaptured Carthage. In this event, one would have to accept that the great battle with the Berbers occurred in the 78th year of the Hegira, i.e., 698. This date, however, contradicts what many chroniclers say. I think,

345. Ibn Adhari, p.29. —Ibn Khaldoun, p.214. —Al-Baladhuri, p.360. —Noweiri, *op.cit.* — Ubayd Allah, p.41. — Al-Maliki, p.145.

346. All the above chroniclers. — Diehl, *op.cit*, p.585. — Levi-Provencal is dubious about this information as this destruction was contrary to the character of the Berbers. I believe that it was caused a few centuries later by the Arabs while hostilities between them were going on.

347. The chronology of this battle is very uncertain and is placed somewhere between the 69th year of the Hegira, 688-9 (Ibn Khaldoun, Ubayd Allah, etc.) and the 84th = 703-4. Al-Athir writes the 79th = 698-9. Kairouani the 84th, a view shared by Eliae Nisibeni, p.75.

therefore, that Kahena was killed in the 84th year.[348]

Hardly anything was left now to the Byzantines but a few towns and Ceuta. Yet there was no effort on their part to recapture North Africa or to stop the Arabs from advancing.[349]

3

John sailed towards Crete to get supplies and to await the king's orders and reinforcements without which he could not undertake a counter-attack against the Arabs. It appears that in Crete the fleet and army officers entered into a conspiracy. It is surmised that the fleet officers had not been vigilant enough and thus had been easily surprised by the Arabs. In battle, too, they had not shown a warlike spirit. Naturally, they feared the king's wrath, who would be informed of their disobedience by John. Therefore, they decided to revolt against Leontius and to depose him.[350] It is said that they killed John, who put up a resistance,[351] and elected as king Apsimarus,[352] admiral (drungarius) of the

348. Diehl, *op.cit.* — Becker, in *C.M.H*, II, 370. — Wellhausen, *op.cit.* — Mercier, I, 215-6. — Talbi maintains that in the same year (78th) Carthage was conquered and Kahina defeated. — Julien, II, 21.

349. Ostrogorsky, *op.cit.*, p.141. — Diehl, *Le Monde*, p.248.

350. Theophanes, p.370. — Nicephorus, p.40. — Zonaras, III, 325. — George the Monk, p.732. — Sathas, *Synopsis*, p.115.

351. Leo the Grammarian, p.166. — Paparrigopoulos, III, 263-4.

352. The name Apsimarus is not Greek. It is possible that he was a Graecogoth who descended from a Gothic family which had settled on the south shores of Asia Minor during the Gothic invasions. Bury, II, 354. The ending "mar" meant prince, noble, in most German dialects. It is, therefore, possible that Apsimar was a general of noble descent. It has been maintained that the linguistic origin of the name is Iranian, from the family of languages of the Alans. *Afsimar* in this dialect means "brother" (see Maricq, A., *La Durée des Partis Populaires à Con/ple).* In those days the Byzantine fleet was composed of the imperial or "battle fleet" which was based in Constantinople and the fleet of the "Carabisiani" or "Caravon" whose chief was usually the general of the "Caravon" (ships) and under him the admiral (Drungarius) of the Cibyrrhaeots. It is possible that in this particular case the patrician and general John was the admiral and Apsimarus the vice-admiral. Guilland, *Etudes de Titulature.* —Bury, *The Naval Policy.*

Cibyrrhaeots,[353] to whom they gave the roman name of Tiberius. It is probable, though no source states this as a definite fact, that Apsimarus was a party to the conspiracy. This insurrection precluded every hope for an immediate recapture of Africa,[354] as though the conspirators had decided to restrict themselves to the natural borders of Byzantium. For years to come, the Byzantines were to be faced with an immediate danger which did not allow them to turn their attention to ventures other than the protection of their proper domain.

Meantime, Constantinople had been hit by the bubonic plague. It is not known precisely when the capital was hit. It is almost certain that the plague came from Syria where thousands of people had died of it.[355]

I presume that it came from Syria because the people were hit by it when Leontius undertook the cleaning[356] of the port of Neorius[357] and it is possible that a ship from Syria (for trading between the two countries had never ceased) had carried the germ. The plague scourged the city for four months.

Apsimarus at the head of the navy and army, anchored at the port of Sycae.[358] Leontius resisted with his small forces for

353. Cibyra was a small city in Asia Minor (Pr. Pamphylias) near cape Kara Bournou. It is possible that this city subsequently became capital of the theme of the Cybyrraeots. See also scholiae of Pertusi in Const. Porphyrogennetus, *de Them*, p.151 ff. Theophanes writes "under the chief of the Kourikiotes". Korykos was a coastal city of Pamphylia, founded by Attalus. It too belonged to the theme. It is possible that there was a division of Kourikiotes whose leader may have been Apsimarus. Ramsay, *Geography*, p.384. Nicephorus writes: "Apsimarus prince of the Kourikiotes..." Bar Hebraeus in *Chr. Syriacum* reports that Apsimarus was Governor(?) of Cilicia. Ancient Korykos, southwest of Tarsus, was an important fortress of Cilicia.

354. Kaegi, *Some Reconsiderations*.

355. Eliae Nisibeni, p.74. — Wellhausen, *op.cit.*, p.433. — Tabari, II, 1035. Victims of the plague were so numerous in Syria that a great number of the inhabitants fled to Asia Minor and the Arabs were forced to cancel their summer invasion of Asia Minor. Athir, IV, 364. — Tabari, II, 1036.

356. Nicephorus, p.40. — Theophanes, p.370. — Leo the Grammarian, p.166.

357. A port south of the main port of the Bay of the Golden Horn. Neorion was not only a naval base but also a trading port. Janin, *Con/ple*, pp.225-6.

358. 13th district of Constantinople where we find today Galata.

several months and in spite of the enormous difficulties created by the plague defended the city with great vigour until he was overcome by Apsimarus. The officers of the guard of the gate of Vlachernae were convinced by Apsimarus to join his side, or as Theophanes writes "treason by foreign nobles who held the keys of the gate" and thus he entered Constantinople. As the matter is presented, it gives rise to certain questions: Were the nobles bribed? One source states[359] that Apsimarus was helped by the Greens, as Leontius was helped by the Blues when he deposed Justinian. It was only natural for the Greens to despise Leontius for, not only did they support and were supported by Justinian, but, as is most likely, Leontius out of gratitude must have assisted the Deme of the Blues at a time when antagonism between the two Demes was running high.[360] Hence, these "foreign nobles" must have been the officials of a district[361] of the Greens lying outside the city who were more fanatical and who, inspite of the oath which they had taken, gave the keys to Apsimarus to assist him in the overthrow of Leontius.

Soldiers and sailors upon entering the city began to loot the houses[362] as if Constantinople had been taken by assault.[363]

359. Cumont, *Chroniques.*

360. Levtchenko, *The Blues and the Greens.*

361. The Demes lying outside the city were called "Peratikoi". Christophilopoulou, *Those outside Constantinople,* etc.

362. Theophanes, p.371. — Nicephorus, p.40. — Zonaras, III, 325. — Sathas, *Synopsis,* p.116.

363. Amandos, I, 264. — Brooks, in *C.M.H.,* II, 698.

CHAPTER VIII

APSIMARUS-TIBERIUS

Little is known about this Emperor either. The sources fail to give us a picture of his character and of his achievements.

After his entry into Constantinople, and the looting of the noble houses (I suppose of the wealthy citizens),[364] Apsimarus ordered Leontius' arrest. As was the custom in those days, Leontius' nose was cut so as to render him inoffensive[365] to the Emperor. Leontius was then cloistered in the monastery of Dalmatius, which was situated in the eastern section of Constantinople, in the quarter known as "Psamathion" near Xerolophos, 12th district of the city.[366]

1

Apsimarus was an able statesman and his reign proved rather successful.[367] Unfortunately, some of his actions do not bespeak

364. Theophanes, p.371. — Nicephorus, p.40. — Zonaras, III, 325. — Sathas, *Synopsis*, p.116 "the vulgar people of the fleet..." In spite of what is stated by the above chroniclers I believe that the Greens bore some responsibility because they grasped the occasion to hit at their enemies, the Blues, who formed the wealthy class of the city's population.

365. As I have repeatedly explained the cutting of the nose was considered as a mild punishment because in principle the person thus punished was forever excluded from the possibility of holding office. I simply say "in principle".

366. According to the patridographers (*S.O.C.*, p.280) this monastery was built by the patrician Dalmatius, nephew of Constantine the Great. Codinus mentions more or less the same (*Migne, P.G.* Vol. 157, p.609). Janin in *Les Eglises de Con/ple*, pp.86-89, disagrees with this version and maintains that the monastery was founded in 382 by St. Isaac the Syrian, who was succeeded by his disciple Dalmatius. Dalmatius was abbot from 396-438. The nephew of Constantine the Great was killed in 337-8. Indeed, Caesar Dalmatius was probably killed in 337. See Dagron, *Naissance d'une Capitale*, pp.28,185.

367. Grierson, *Catalogue*, p.624.

a noble character, though such acts were often justified by the customs of the age.

Apsimarus arrested almost all of Leontius' friends and certain notables. Some suffered punishment by lashing. Finally, all were exiled and their property confiscated.[368] He was crowned by the Patriarch Callinicus.[369] As an official name he assumed that of Tiberius. Sources state that he reigned for seven years.

I mentioned previously that Apsimarus had the support of the Deme of the Greens. The role played by the Demes during this period has not received proper attention. It has been maintained, especially by Dvornik,[370] that since the time of Heraclius the Demes had lost their political significance and exerted no influence on political matters. The cause is attributed to the reforms in administration which dealt a mortal blow on the Demes and brought about their political decline. It has been stressed that indicative of this state of affairs was the fact that they did not participate any more in political demonstrations. This view, shared by most historians, had found me[371] in agreement; however, I now believe that we must revise our views and examine the matter in greater depth. Indeed, the political feuds between the Demes had ceased in the days of Heraclius and the reasons were, on the one hand, the Emperor's personality and, on the other, the immense dangers with which the Empire was faced. However, after Heraclius' death the situation changed and the Demes repeatedly proved that they had an important role to play in the political life of Byzantium. For example, during the reign of Constantine II they showed their disapproval of Martina; during the reign of Heraclius II they forced the Emperor to crown Constantine III co-Emperor; they were politically active during the reigns of Justinian II, of

368. Nicephorus, p.40. — Theophanes, p.371. — Zonaras, III, 325.
369. Cumont, *Chroniques.*
370. Dvornik, F., *The Circus Parties in Byzantium,* in *Byzantina-Metabyzantina* Vol. I, (New York, 1946).
371. Stratos, Vol. I, pp.262 ff.

Leontius and of Apsimarus, and throughout the 7th, 8th and 9th centuries.[372]

Apsimarus wished to reinforce the defence of Constantinople and undertook the repair of all the coastal walls, which had suffered great damage and had been neglected[373] after the great attack of the Arabs in the reign of Constantine IV. It is possible that the chain which protected the Bay of the Golden Horn was installed then. Apsimarus paid particular attention to the reconstruction of the coastal walls.[374]

Michael the Syrian provides us with a curious piece of information.[375] He states that the Slavs, with whom Leontius had not been occupied, had revolted and were pillaging "Romania". Apsimarus declared war on them and subdued them. In no other source do we find confirmation of this incident. On the contrary, we know that Justinian II had led an expedition a few years before against the Slavs and had overcome them.[376] I, therefore, wonder whether this information concerns the insurrection of the Slavs and their pillaging of the shores of Thrace, which was successfully repulsed by Constantine IV.[377] Brooks,[378] relying on the source of Sathas, insists that Apsimarus placed the Mardaites in the coastal region of Pamphylia. As I wrote in Chapter III, Justinian withdrew the Mardaites from the mountains of Lebanon and installed a number of them in this region. If, however, Brooks' view is correct, then it is possible that we are here concerned with a few remnants of the Mardaites who, on account of the plague which was scourging Syria, had fled their mountains and sought refuge on Byzantine soil. The king, in order to reinforce this region, allowed them to settle in Attaleia under the leadership of a "Catepano" as Constantine Porphyrogennetus calls him.

372. Maricq, A., *La Durée du Regime des Partis.*
373. *S.O.C.* 30, 11 ff, and 208, 19. — Brooks, in *C.M.H.*, II, 410.
374. Guilland, R., *Etudes Byzantines*, pp.263-4.
375. Michael the Syrian, II, 473. — Bar Hebraeus, p.104.
376. See above, Ch. II.
377. Stratos, Vol. IV, pp.88 ff.
378. Brooks, in *C.M.H.* II, 410. — Sathas, *Med. Lib*, II, 55. —Bury, *op.cit.*, II, 356

The coins minted during the reign of Apsimarus represent him in army uniform[379] and are almost similar with those of Leontius.[380]

Another issue in need of clarification concerns the recolonisation of Cyprus. Constantine Porphyrogennetus writes[381] that seven years after the transportation of the Cypriots to the region of Kyzicus, Justinian wished to repopulate Cyprus, which during all this time had remained without any inhabitants!!

The transportation of the Cypriots (see Chapter III) occurred in 691, hence the attempt at recolonisation must have begun in 698, i.e., after 7 years. But in 698 Apsimarus was king; consequently, either the name of the king given by Constantine Porphyrogennetus or the chronology is wrong. Nevertheless, according to the source, the king sent a special delegate[382] (a magistrianus, or royal man) with written proposals.[383] This royal delegate was accompanied by three Cypriot nobles ("the so-called Faggumes"). The king asked the Caliph to liberate and send to Cyprus all the Cypriots who were in Syria. I presume that as he writes "to liberate", this must have meant that Cypriots in Syria were captives. It is possible to agree with Jenkins, who writes in his commentary to Constantine's book that these Cypriots may have been taken captive during the Arabian raids of Cyprus. The Caliph (Abd al-Malik) accepted the request and Apsimarus sent to the island all the Cypriots who were in "Romania" and more especially in Kyzicus as well as those who were in the "Cibyrrhaeot and Thracesian themes", as stated in the source.

Thus, Cyprus was repopulated. It is maintained that Tiberius

379. Sabatier, *Monnaies Byzantines*, II, 30-2.

380. Grierson, *Catalogue*, p.624.

381. Constantine Porphyrogennetus, *De Adm. Imp.* I, Ch. 47.

382. Con. Porphyrogennetus, *op. cit.* —Dölger, *Regesten*, p. 261. —Jenkins, *The Mission of St. Demetrianus*, p. 268. —Hackett, *History*, p. 46. —Bury, II, 356.

383. "He wrote to the emir...", *De Adm, Imp.* Ch. 47, p.214. —Sathas, *Med. Lib.* II, 37. Here Constantine Porphyrogennetus makes another mistake. He writes to the emir of Bagdad. However, Bagdad became the capital of the Chaliphate after the fall of the Umayyads.

reorganised the administration of the island and especially its defence which had been completely neglected during the "peace" period. Intense work was required for the fortification of parts of the island, and this was done.[384] I am not certain whether these reports are absolutely reliable; however, most contemporary historians seem to accept them. It is possible that the information is basically right but that the date is erroneous.

2

The war continued with the same intensity during the entire period of Tiberius' reign. It is terribly difficult to give an account of these military undertakings and especially to come to some reasonable conclusions about the chronology. Mainly, the events which took place in Armenia, the battles and wars, present the greatest problem, not only because of the information given in Arab sources, but also because of the chronological tradition followed by the Armenian sources which, to make matters even more complex, seem to contradict each other. I shall begin by giving an account of the most significant military enterprises involving the Arabs and the Byzantines and then I shall try to give a picture of the events which occurred in Armenia.

Tiberius, as soon as he assumed power, appointed his brother Heraclius, who was a very able and experienced officer, "supreme general of the outlying Cavallarikon themes".[385] Here, an explanation is needed. "Cavallarikon themes" were not in existence, hence, the term "theme" must refer here to an "army corps". What does Theophanes mean, though, by "sole general"?

If we are to take into account what Zonaras writes, then it appears that Heraclius was appointed general over many army divisions which did or did not belong to themes and was placed above all the generals of the themes. Consequently, he must

384. Kyrris, *Military Colonies.*

385 Theophanes, p.371. —Cedrenus, p.777. —Zonaras, III, 325, who writes "sole general of all the cavalry and army troops".

have been the commander-in-chief of the entire army of the region which was placed under his orders. He was dispatched to the area of Cappadocea and probably had Caesarea as his base. From the above, one may conclude that Heraclius was appointed supreme general of the armed forces which were serving in Eastern Asia Minor. According to the Byzantine chroniclers this occurred in the year 6190=698.

The situation seems to have been uneventful during the year 699. Tiberius was busy reorganising the Empire and placing his friends in key positions. The Arabs were occupied with the insurrection of Abd al-Rahman who was a great threat to them.

In 6192 (700), 2nd year of Tiberius' reign, Heraclius at the head of a pwerful army invaded Syria killing the people and pillaging the land. According to Theophanes he killed 200,000 Arabs! Other chroniclers give more reasonable numbers.[386] Heraclius conquered Samosata and took many captives and much booty. "He inspired the Arabs with great fear."[387] This incursion left a deep impression on the Arabs who were taken by surprise.[388]

At about the same time (81st year of the Hegira) Ubayd Allah ben Abd al-Malik, i.e., the Caliph's son, invaded Byzantine Armenia and conquered Erzeroum (Qaliqala) as the Arabs call the place,[389] or "Theodosioupolis" according to the Byzantines.[390]

386. Theophanes, p.371, "200,000 thousand". —Michael the Syrian, II, 474, gives the number 5,000.

387. Zonaras, III, 325. —Cedrenus, p.777. —Bar Hebraeus, p.104. —Leo Grammarian, p.167. —Eliae Nisibeni, p.74, but he mentions the year 79 = 698-9.

388. Brooks, II, 401, who gives the date 701. —Diehl, *op.cit.*, p.246. —Paparrigopoulos, p.265. —Bury, II, 355. —Brooks, *The Arabs in Asia*, for the year 79th.

389. Tabari, p.129. —Ibn al-Athir, IV, 367. —Brooks, II, 410. —*Ibid.*, *The Arabs*, p.190. —Cheira, *La Lutte*, who writes that Tiberius sent an army in 698, 79th of Hegira and conquered Theodosioupolis which, however, was recaptured by the Arabs in 700. —*E.I.* p.730.

390. Ancient Karinites, Karin for the Armenians. Fortified town not far from the springs of the Upper Euphrates (Kara Su). It guarded the passes to Persia and to the Caucasus.

The following year, 6193=700-701, Ubayd Allah (or Abdallah) invaded "Romania" and besieged the fort Tarandon.[391] Abdallah did not succeed in conquering the city despite repeated efforts and attacks and was forced to depart.[392] He proceeded towards Mopsuesta[393] which had been devastated and abandoned. He occupied the city, transported a large number of workers and began to rebuild and fortify it so as to render it a powerful stronghold. Unfortunately, chronological information is very confused and each chronicler, especially the Arabs, gives a different date.[394] The fortification of Mopsuesta aimed at the protection of Antioch which, as I have stated, had suffered repeated incursions from the Byzantines.

During the year 6194=702-3,[395] Mohammed ben Marwan, brother of the Caliph, invaded Armenia IV whose inhabitants had revolted against the Greeks. The combined forces of Greeks

391. Taranton (Darende), 100 kil. northwest of Melitene on the Tokma Su tributary on the right of the Euphrates. Powerful fortress which guarded the passes to Caesarea and Germanicea.

392. Theophanes, p.372. —Cedrenus, p.777. —According to Al-Baladhuri (p.290) and Yakut (III, 534) the city was conquered but some Arabs date the conquest in 711.

393. City of Asia Minor northeast of Tarsus on the river Pyramus. It is situated on the main route leading to Antioch.

394. Theophanes, p.372, for the year 6193 = 701-2. —Michael the Syrian, for the years 702-3 and 704. According to him, II, 477-8, Mopsuesta was finally built in 706. —*Chronicle of the year 846*, for the year 704. —Eliae Nisibeni, p.75, following Khuwarazmi, 84th = 703. —Yakubi, II, 337, 83rd = 702. —Ibn al-Athir, IV, 398-9, 84th=703. —Tabari, II, 1127. Baladhuri, following Wakidi, writes that Mopsuesta was rebuilt by Adballah when he arrived in this town during his summer campaign, that he erected a strong fortress and installed there a garrison, and that the Arabs, up to that time, had not as then reached there. He states, however, that others maintain that Mopsuesta was built by Adb al-Malik in the year 85 = 704. —Brooks, II, 410, gives the year 703. —Bury, II, 355, the year 701. —Wellhausen, p.433, gives the various dates of the Arab chroniclers. It appears, though, that the rebuilding of Mopsuesta did not begin immediately after the conquest. It was completed approximately in 705, as I shall argue further. —Müller, I, 415.

395. Theophanes, p.372, who, however, dates this expedition in 6195. —Zonaras, III, 325. —Suyti, p.222 gives the 82nd year of the Hegina = 701. —Athir, IV, 382. —Acoghig de Daron, pp.154-5. Both give the 82nd year. —Bury, II, 355. —Wellhausen, p.433, the year 6194.

and Armenians, who had remained faithful to the Greeks, were defeated and finally after the fall of Martyroupolis the entire province was forced to surrender to the Arabs. At the head of the Byzantine forces was a certain Vaanes (I suppose an Armenian, Vahan) who was nicknamed "Heptadaemon"? Mohammed appointed Abu Saik as governor, but the Armenians conspired and killed him.

Theophanes narrates the battle between the Arabs and the Byzantines twice and what is more gives two different dates. According to him[396] in 6195=703, "Azar" undertook an expedition to Cilicia, but was routed by Heraclius. Theophanes narrates almost the same story for the year 6196=704-5, but calls "Azar" "Yazid ben Hounein".[397] According to the Arabs, Abd al-Malik, who was then (probably in 704-5) in Mopsuesta, ordered Yazid ben Hounein to march against the Greeks at the head of a powerful army. Indeed, Yazid marched towards Sision (Sision Castle)[398] and lay siege.[399] Meantime, Heraclius hastened to save the castle[400] and in hard battle won a victory over the Arabs. According to the Byzantines 10-12,000 Arabs were killed.

This is all we know about the military enterprises in central and southern Asia Minor.

During this time, there were many insurrections, battles and catastrophes in Armenia. Unfortunately, as I have already written, the sources present such contradictions, especially in chronological matters, that I am forced to employ the dates

396. Theophanes, p.372. —Cedrenus, p.778. —Zonaras, III, 326.

397. Wellhausen, p.433.

398. Flavioupolis, or Siskia, a city near the river Pyramus.

399. According to Baladhuri the Caliph himself conducted the siege. He had sent forth Yazid in order, I presume, to attack the Byzantine army which was hastening to the help of the besieged. The chronicler writes that the fort was conquered but there is no evidence to confirm this information.

400. Theophanes, p.372. —Zonaras, III, 326. —Suyuti, p.185. —Tabari (II, 1185) writes that the battle was given in the 86th year = 705-6 near Mopsuesta. Diehl (p.246) the year 703. —Paparrigopoulos, (p.265) the same year. —Brooks, (II, 410) for the year 704. —Bury (p.355) has both dates, so does Caetani. —Wellhausen (pp.433-4) the year 704.

which are now accepted, though I am not always in absolute agreement with them.

For some time peace reigned in Armenia. How long this lasted is not known. Perhaps the peaceful period lasted for five years, and while it did no hostilities could have taken place between the Arabs and the Byzantines. Consequently, the events narrated by the various chroniclers must have happened after 693. Moreover, we know that up to this time the Arabs were occupied with internal feuds.

It appears that an insurrection took place in Armenia and Abd al-Malik sent his brother Mohammed ben Marwan to suppress it. Much has been written about the recapture of Dovin, about massacres and looting. However, all this is rather vague. According to Ghevond these events took place in the 16th year of Abd al-Malik = 699-700, or 700-1.

Mohammed appointed as governor of Armenia Abdallah ibn Hatim al Bahili, who arrested many Armenian nobles and seized their fortunes. He also arrested the Patriarch Sahak (Isaac) and the prince Sbad Begratuni of whom he was becoming suspicious and sent them bound to Damascus.[401] Mohammed ordered the execution of many Armenians. Then Sahak, who was very ill in Carrhae (Harran), wrote to Mohammed to take pity on the Armenians and to restore peace to the country. His letter moved Mohammed to follow Sahak's advice.[402] It has been said (Ghevond) that Mohammed, whom he calls "bloodthirsty daemon", had in the meantime undertaken a general massacre of the inhabitants extending all the way to the district of Djermdzor! (contemporary Shatakh in middle Armenia). Another source states that the expedition took place in the year 101.[403] According to Kiracos, Mohammed, as soon as he received the letter, ended all hostilities and dispatched delegates to collect taxes.

Sbad managed to escape and to return to Armenia. In

401. Grousset, *Histoire de l'Armenie*, p.309. —*Chronicon 1234*, p.203. —Acoghig, German ed., p.90. —Lebeau, XII, 29.

402. Acoghig, *op.cit.*, pp.73, 90. —Vardan, p.97. —Kiracos, p.33. —Ghevond, pp.19-20. Of course, the chronologies are not all similar.

403. Suyuti, p.222.

6195=703 a general revolt took place in Armenia when all the Saracens were killed! The Byzantines were asked to send forces to assist the region.[404] In other words, Sbad is presented as having subjected the country again to the Byzantines.

Here, I would like to make the following observation: It has been said that after writing the letter Sahak died in Carrhae. However, Sahak died between 703 and 705. Consequently, either the chronology is erroneous or Sahak did not die after having sent the letter. It appears that indeed Mohammed invaded Armenia and suppressed the revolt in the 82nd year of the Hegira=702.[405] I also think that the chronology concerning Sbad's escape, i.e., 700,[406] is wrong. I believe that both the escape and the request for help from the Byzantines occurred at a later date.

As I wrote previously, in 6195=703 the people of Armenia revolted.[407] Their leaders were Sbad, Vard, son of Theodore Rstuni, the princes of Vaspurakan and all the Armenian nobles. The Arab garrison of Nahchitchevan came to the attack, yet though the Armenians numbered 2,000 as against the 5,000 or 8,000 thousand of the garrison, they managed to fortify themselves in the village of Vardanakert[408] on the banks of the river Araxes, near Akori. There the battle took place and the Arabs were routed.[409]

Meantime, the Caliph ordered Mohammed to gather new forces and proceed to an attack. Mohammed invaded Armenia again and with great cruelty suppressed the revolution.[410]

Sbad, who had by this time made known his victory to the

404. Theophanes, p.372. —Cedrenus, p.778. —Zonaras, III, 325. —Elie Bar Sinaya.

405. *E.I.* old ed., Vol. 3, pp.719-20.

406. Laurent, *L'Armenie.*

407. Theophanes, p.372. —Zonaras, III, 326. —Filler, *Questiones,* pp.30-1.

408. There are many cities with the name Vardanakert in Armenia. See Ghazarian, *Armenien,* p.85, note 49.

409. Acoghig, *op.cit.,* p.73. —Vardan, p.95. —Filler, pp.27-30. —Kirakos, p.34. —Jean Catholicos, p.83. —Ghevond, pp.24-5.

410. Theophanes, p.372. —Jean Catholicos, p.208. —Ibn al-Athir, IV, 399-411. —Filler, p.30-1. —Grousset, p.311. —Bury, II, 355. —Wellhausen, p. 433.

Emperor and was requesting assistance in the face of renewed danger, escaped to Tayk or Daykh and fortified himself in the castle of Touhark.[411] It is probable that the Emperor gave him the title of "couropalates"[412] in 703.

Mohammed, after having pillaged Armenia pitilessly, appointed as governor his friend Kazim (some maintain that he was the governor of Nahchichevan) with orders to kill all the Armenian princes for these nobles constantly revolted and sided now with the Arabs and then with the Byzantines. Under the pretense of payment of taxes due or of some feast, Kazim brought many nobles and their courtiers to Nahchichevan and to a neighbouring town called Khram, or Klath, or Hrom, shut them up in the two cathedrals, then set fire the buildings and burned them alive.[413] The exact date of this tragedy is not known. Every chronicler supplies his own date and every historian accepts the one given by the chronicler on whom he relies. We also lack information concerning the number of people who were burned. It appears that it was quite large. Many historians date this event in the first year of Walid ibn Abd al-Malik's reign, i.e. in 705-6.

Sbad and the Armenian princes who had taken refuge in Tayk together with the Byzantine reinforcements attacked but in the canton of Vaad near the village Draspert were defeated and forced to retreat into Byzantine territory. The Emperor installed Sbad and the nobles who followed him in Poti (Fasis)[414] at Colchis. These events took place in the year 705-6.

411. Ter Ghevondian. —Laurent, p.205.

412. Dölger, *Regesten*, p.262. —Filler, pp.28-9. —Vardan, p.96. —Grousset, p.314. —Ter Ghevondian, *op.cit.*

413. Theophanes, p.372. —Zonaras, III, 325. —Eliae Nisibeni, pp.75-6. —Michael the Syrian, II, 474. —Chronicon 1234. —Denys de Tell Mahre. —Ardzrouni p.93. —Acoghig, *op.cit.*, p.90. —Jean Catholicos, p.86. —Bury, II, 335. —Ibn al-Athir, IV, 411. —Filler, pp.30-1. —Lebeau, XII, 29. —Grousset, p.310. —Yakubi, II, 324-5. —Ghazarian, p.45. —Saint Martin, *Memoires*, I, 340. —Müller, I, 415. —Laurent, p.204. —Wellhausen, p.433.

414. Ghevond, pp.33-4. —Muyldermans, p.98. —Ter Ghevondian, *op.cit.* —Grousset p.313. —Charanis, *The Armenians*, p.13. —Laurent, p.205.

3

As I wrote in the previous chapter, after the conquest of Carthage by the Arabs the Byzantines were too involved in internal matters to make any effort at reconquering Africa.

The Arabs and the populations which had accepted Islam, controlled all the routes which led to the main gold mines of the world[415] and thus exerted a pressure upon Byzantium by debarring it from all the sources of gold. The Arabs now became a trading power, for they gradually assumed the monopoly in transportation of merchandise between East and West. It should be noted that the Berbers, who had been forced to accept Islam after the death of Kahena, never ceased to revolt and to create problems for the Arabs. However, the permanent inhabitants were friendly to the conquerors and resistance originated from the Mauritanians who inhabited the mountainous regions.

After the destruction of Carthage, the citizens who had managed to survive abandoned the old ruined city. Gradually, a new city began to rise to which Hassan decided to add a long canal that would connect the lake of Tunis with the sea.

The Byzantine fleet of Sicily[416] regularly raided the shores of Africa which were poorly protected by the scant Arab garrisons. No organised attempt was made, however, for a reconquest of Africa. In contrast, the Arabs, without encountering any opposition from the Byzantine fleet, conquered with ease Pandelaria. Admiral of the fleet was Abd al-Malik al-Katan[417] who came from Egypt in 700. It has been said that Muza ben Nuzayr, who replaced Hassan as Governor of Africa, constructed a powerful naval base in Tunis and in 703 invaded Sicily,[418] but nothing else is mentioned and this information has not been confirmed.

415. Lombard, *L'Islam*, p.14.

416. Eickoff, *Seekrieg*. The admiral of the fleet was the general of the Carabisiani.

417. Orsi, *Bizantina Siciliae*.

418. Bury, *The Naval Policy*. —However, Muzah was appointed Governor of Africa in 708, hence Bury's information is not chronologically right. I shall return to this matter.

4

Meantime, certain events took place in Italy which, fortunately, had no consequences, but betrayed a mistrust towards Byzantium and a certain hostility on the part of the people towards the Empire. Between Constantinople and Rome no issue had arisen and relations were peaceful and friendly. In 701 a certain Theophylactos was elected Pope. He was of Greek origin[419] and assumed the papal throne on the 30th of October 701. His official name was John VI. At about the same time Tiberius appointed as Exarch of Italy the patrician and Cubicularius[420] also named Theophylactos. The new Exarch arrived in Sicily, which was considered very significant because of its geographical position, and towards the end of 701 or the beginning of 702 left for Rome.[421]

As soon as the military authorities were informed of Theophylactos' arrival they rose up and clamouring and cursing gathered outside Rome.[422] The cause of this uprising is entirely unknown. As I mentioned, relations between the Emperor and Rome were friendly hence the Pope was in no danger. Moreover, it was only natural for an Exarch to go to Rome. The new Exarch was under an obligation to pay a visit to the Pope and to the Byzantine territories in Italy, consequently the Pope was under no threat. I tend to agree with the view which maintains[423] that the reasons for this uprising were economical.

419. *L.P.* I, 383 "Natione Grecus". —Bertolini, *Roma di Fronte*, p.408.

420. The king's room was called "Cubiculum". The responsibility for this room, or rooms, rested with the "Cubicularius". This was a very important title and the person who held it was considered the king's confidant. The title patrician and Cubicularius was one of the greatest. Yannopoulos, pp.72-3.

421. *L.P.* I, 383. —Caetani, p.998. —Diehl, *Exarchat*, p.361.

422. *L.P.* I, 383. —Hodgkin, *op.cit.*, VI, 336. —Hartmann, *Geschichte Italiens*, II, 74-5. —Romano, *La Dominazione*, p.325. —Bertolini, *op.cit.*, p.409.

423. Guillou, *Regionalisme*, p.211.

The people accused the administration for the economic decline with which the country was faced and for the suffering which this brought upon them.

The Pope, who feared further disorder, ordered that the gates of Rome be closed and sent priests to assuage the populace. Finally, the crowds were dispersed.[424] The information about the uprising of the military forces of Italy is to be found only in the *Liber Pontificalis.*

These events took place in 702. Theophylactos went from Rome to his seat which was in Ravenna.[425] Nothing else is known about him. However, it was thanks to the Pope's intervention that the incident did not take a sad turn which would have certainly aggravated the relations of Constantinople and Rome.

It has been said[426] that during this time, probably in 697-8, the duchy of Venice was founded. The duke was elected by the people, but the Emperor had to ratify his election.

The situation in Italy was unfortunately aggravated by the Lombards. In spite of the truce, the duke of Beneventum, Guisulfus, invaded the duchy of Rome and conquered the towns Souram, Hirpinum and Arcim (Rocca d'Arce).[427] Thus, the borders of his duchy reached to the river Liri. Afterwards, he invaded Campania, captured most of the inhabitants and looted the place completely. He also conquered the town Horrea, which probably lay eight miles south of Rome on the *Via Latina,* where he encamped. No one could resist his force. Again, the Pope had to intervene and after repeated attempts succeeded in putting an end to these operations. The Pope sent delegates to

424. *L.P.* I, 383. —Mann, The Lives of the Popes, pp.105-8. —Romano, *op.cit.*

425. Diehl, *op.cit.*, p.361. —Guillou, *op.cit.* —Hartmann, *op.cit.*, II, 74. —Gregorovius, *op.cit.*, II, 187-8.

426. Dandulo, p.127. —Diehl, *Exarchat de Ravenne*, pp. 33-9. Others maintain that it was founded in 713.

427. Paul the Deacon, VI, 27. —Hodgkin, VI, 336. —Romano, *op.cit.*, p.325.

ransom all the prisoners. Finally, he managed to convince Guisulfus to leave Campania. Guisulfus, however, kept the first three towns which he had conquered.[428] This invasion took place in the 2nd or 3rd year of Pope John = 703 or 704.

428. *L.P.* I, 383 and note 2, p.384. —Paul the Deacon, VI, 27. —Hartmann, *op.cit.*, II, p.75. —Romano, p.325. —Caetani, pp.998-9. —Gregorovius, *op.cit.*, II, 189. —Hodgkin, VI, 336. —Bertolini, *op.cit.* The city Arce was on the river Liri and protected the Duchy from any attack by Rome.

CHAPTER IX

JUSTINIAN IN EXILE

As mentioned in Chapter VI, Justinian was exiled in faraway Cherson which, ever since the 4th century, was sometimes used as a place of exile.[429] Cherson, which originally was named Chersonesos, was an old colony of Megara. The inhabitants of Megara had at first occupied and colonised Heracleia which lay on the Black Sea in Asia Minor, In 559 the city fell under the authority of the aristocrats who deported the democrats. These found refuge in Crimea where they built and colonised Cherson. This city was near contemporary Sebastoupolis.

The inhabitants of Cherson, though subject to Constantinople, had preserved their old customs on the basis of which they administered their affairs. Due to the privileges which Constantine the Great and Diocletian had granted to the city because of the assistance Cherson offered during the war against the Bosporus and Sarmata,[430] the administrative system was purely democratic. Thus, the Chersonites preserved the democratic traditions of ancient Greece. Three hundred notables, elected yearly and headed by the *"primus"*, governed the region. Cherson was a flourishing merchant city with a great trading activity because of its geographical position.[431] Justinian I had fortified the city in such a way that it was able to withstand

429. Martin, who had been elected Pope in 649, was exiled and died there. He was arrested and condemned to death, but the sentence was changed to that of exile. —Minns, *Scythians and Greeks*, p.515 ff. —Constantine Porphyrogennetus, *De Adm. Imp.* Chapter 53, on the privileges granted by Constans or Constantius Chloros and Great Constantine.

430. Bury, *op.cit.*, II, 357. —Porphyrogennetus, *De Adm. Imp.* concerning "the chief" see Chapters 42. 23, 52 and Chapters 53. 24, 110 ff. The chief is also called "the Wreathed One". See Chapters 52. 3 and 24. According to Cedrenus he was an imperial officer.

431. Lopez, *L'Evolution Politique*, 4.392. —Cherson was the intermediary trading station for the Russians, the Petchenegs, the Goths, etc.

the attacks of the various hordes which encircled it.[432]

Justinian had not faced his dethronement with submission. Some friends and generals had been exiled with him, among them the general Stephanos, who had been Eparch of Constantinople when Justinian was deposed.[433] It appears that for a few years he undertook no action, yet his desire to revenge himself upon all those who had brought about his fall from power proved stronger. After Leontius' fall, he began to entertain the idea of resuming the throne and seems to have declared that this was a matter of a few days[434] and to fashion his behaviour accordingly. The citizens became fearful of these operations, therefore the notables conceived of a plan to kill him.[435] The city authorities finally decided to arrest him and send him back to Constantinople where it would be in the Emperor's hands to decide his fate.[436] Justinian, who was informed of these plans, managed to escape together with his friends to the "fort named Doros, which is situated near the country of the Goths..."[437] According to Bury, these "Goths" were the "Tetraxite Goths" against whom Justinian I had campaigned. Doros[438] was the capital[439] and the main fort of the

432. Vasiliev, *The Goths*, p.71.

433. Theophanes, pp.368, 373. —Yannopoulos does not agree with Guilland's view that Varisvakurius was an old friend of Justinian's who had been exiled with him. According to him Varisvakurius was an inhabitant of Cherson whom Justinian befriended.

434. Vasiliev, pp.80-1.

435. Theophanes, p.372. —Nicephorus, p.40. —Leo the Grammarian, p.167. —Sathas, *Synopsis*, p.116.

436. The above chroniclers and Brooks, *op.cit.*, p. 410. —Bury, *op.cit.*, II, 358. —Ostrogorsky, *op.cit.*, p.141. —Vasiliev, p.81.

437. Nicephorus, p.40. —Theophanes calls it "Daras". This, however, is either an error of the scribe or a corruption of "Doros". Procopius too in "On Edificii" (III, 7 p. 101) calls it "Doros". As Yannopoulos rightly maintains no traces of a town named "Daras" have been discovered. The town Doros was conquered in 786-7 by the Khazars, but after a few years became Byzantine again (Dunlop, *op.cit.*, p.183).

438. Doros, a city lying near contemporary Balaclava. See Yannopoulos, *Studies on Byzantine Personalities*.

439. Dunlop, *History of the Jewish Khazars*, p.183 and note 56. At first, Vasiliev had associated it with the city Mankup Kala, but Russian

Goths in Crimea. Then, Justinian came into contact with the Khagan of the Khazars from whom he sought assistance and asylum.

1

It is reported that the Khagan of the Khazars was named Busir, or Basir, or Ibousir-Glavan.[440] I have already written about the Khazars in a previous volumes.[441] I would, however, like to remind the reader that they were a Turko-Mongolic tribe belonging to the Western Turkish people, and which had first appeared in the 6th century, as written in the Hudud al-Alam (p.467). The Khazars had occupied a major part of the area north of Caucasus and east of the Caspian sea. They were pagan, though groups of them were Jews, Christians, etc.

The Khagan agreed to extend his protection to Justinian who, together with his friends, went to the capital of the Khazars which was called Atil and which lay on the river Volga.[442] There he was received with royal honours and was given the sister of the Khagan in marriage.[443] Her first name had not been

archaeologists today support the view that Eski Kirmen was the medieval town "Doros". The Bishop of Crimea is referred to in the Synod in Troullo as the "Bishop of Cherson of Doros". Later, in the 8th century, Doros became a Metropolitan See to which were annexed all the bishoprics of Gothic Crimea.

440. *Migne, P.G.* 157, 678. —*S.O.C.* p.40.4. —Dunlop, *op.cit.*, p.171 and note 12 p.173, where he states that perhaps his name was Bouserou Gliabarou. —Artamonov M., *Historia Khazar*, 1962 (in Russian).

441. Stratos, Vol, I, p.19 ff. and p.199 ff.

442. Originally the capital was Samandar near the river Terek and on the shores of the Caspian sea. Atil became the capital afterwards. However, Atil was also the Turkish name for the river Volga. According to Hudud al-Alam (p.161) the town Atil on the river Volga, also named Atil (p.75), was the capital of the Khazars and there dwelt the "Tarkhan Khaqan", i.e., the prince of the Khazars. According to Dunlop (*History of the Jewish Khazars*, p.50) Atil was called *Al-Bayada.*

443. Theophanes, p.373. —Zonaras, III, 326. —Nicephorus, p.40. —Leo the Grammarian p.167. For a different view see Michael the Syrian, II, 478. —Bar Hebraeus, p.105. —In the *Chronique de Cumont* we read about the Khagan's daughter. There is some confusion on this matter. However, the patridographers (S.O.C.) specifically state that he married the sister of Ibousir,

determined.[444] The bride was converted to Christianity before the wedding and was given the name "Theodora". It is possible that Justinian chose this name because of the memory of the glorious reign of Justinian I and his empress Theodora. These events probably took place in the year 703-4.[445]

Shortly after, and with the Khagan's permission, Justinian and his wife settled in Phanagoria which is situated on the delta of the river Hypanid (Kuban).[446]

Tiberius, in the meantime, was greatly agitated because of the rumours concerning Justinian's plans. He sent an embassy to the Khagan with promises of many gifts if the Khagan would agree to deliver Justinian to him dead or alive. We do not know the reasons, but it seems that the Khagan, who only a short time before had received Justinian with honours, accepted Tiberius' proposals and decided to get rid of Justinian.[447]

The Khagan immediately dispatched an army division with the excuse that he feared the Byzantines had plans against

though they nowhere mention that he was the Khagan of the Khazars. Nicephorus (p.41) writes that Justinian sent his wife to her father. Consequently the question arises whether Ibousir was the Khagan or whether he was substituting for his old father, in which case the difficulty presented in the sources is resolved for Justinian did marry the daughter of the Khagan who was the sister of Ibousir. This is merely a hypothesis not confirmed by any of the sources—as far as I know.

444. It has been maintained that perhaps her name was Tzitzak. This, though, may have been the name of Constantine V's wife as well, who also came from Khazaria. Dunlop, p.173 and note 13. —Head, *op.cit.*, p.105.

445. Theophanes writes 6th year of Tiberius = 703-4. —Michael the Syrian, 1015 = 704. —Bury, II, 360.

446. Phanagoria was built by the Greeks in the 6th century B.C. It was later called Tmutarakhan. It was situated on the Taman peninsula. According to Vernadskij the word seems to be Turkish. In any event, the city of Phanagoria was practically on the east side of the canal of Kerts and well fortified. It is perhaps for this reason that Justinian asked to dwell in it. See Gregoire, *Le nom de la ville Tmutarakhan.* —Dunlop, under Phanagoria and Tmutarakhan. According to Banescu, *La Domination Byzantine,* the city was called "Matrakha" although in the Byzantine sources it is mentioned as "Tamatarkha". Edrisi states that it was a densely populated centre which flourished economically.

447. Theophanes, p.373. —Nicephorus, p.41. —Zonaras, III, 326. —Sathas, *Synopsis,* p.116. —Leo the Grammarian, p.167.

Justinian's life. In reality his orders were that Justinian was to be guarded "from escaping", as Nicephorus writes, thus insuring the execution of his design. Also he ordered his "local representative..." Papatzi and the prince of the "Scythian" Bosporus named Valgitzi to observe Justinian's movements and to kill him as soon as they received orders.

The above account gives rise to certain qustions: Was Phanagoria attached to the domain of the Khazars? In my opinion certain phrases which we encounter in the chronicles give the impression that though the Khazars had subjugated Phanagoria they had not annexed it. 1) Nicephorus writes: "to the prince of the Scythian Bosporus". Hence, the city Bosporus was Scythian (Gothic) and did not belong to the Khazars. 2) Theophanes mentions "Papatzi, who was his representative in that place..." Hence, the Khagan had a representative in Phanagoria. If, however, he had a representative there, this means that Phanagoria was not immediately attached to him. 3) Zonaras (III, 326.13) states that when Justinian married Theodora "soon after he departed to another land and there dwelt with his wife". This "other land" implies that Phanagoria was not within the domain of the Khazars. However, Zonaras writes again (326.23): "and as for Theodora, he sent her to Khazaria..." The same is to be found in Theophanes (373.14): "and immediately he send Theodora to Khazaria..." Finally, in Phanagoria there was a bishop who was attached to the Metropolitan of Doros.[448] Since there was a Bishop who was attached to the Gothic city Doros, it follows that there must have been many Christians in that region. Moreover, in the *Notitia* of the *Codex Parisianus* (see Gregoire) this bishopric is mentioned as one of the "province of Gothia". It is, therefore, possible that Justinian preferred to settle in Phanagoria because it was not under the immediate rule of the Khazars.

Justinian was informed of the designs of Tiberius and the

448. Vasiliev, *op.cit.*, pp.97. 101-3. —Dunlop, p.94. See Honigmann, *Studies in Slavic Church History*, in *Byz.*, 17/1944-5, p.113, who also mentions Tamatarkha as belonging to the Church of the "province of Gothia".

Khagan by one of Theodora's faithful servants[449] and Theodora sided with her husband.

Justinian planned his escape masterfully. He invited Papatzi the Khagan's representative with whom he was friendly[450] to his house and quite ruthlessly choked him with the string of a bow. Soon after, Valgitzi,[451] "the prince of Bosporus" suffered a similar fate. Thus, Justinian got rid of the chiefs of his guards. He hastened to send Theodora to "Khazaria", or, as Nicephorus writes, to her father,[452] and he escaped from Phanagoria in order to save himself.

2

Justinian, together with a few friends among whom was a brother of Theodora named Truheg,[453] came to "Tomin"[454] a village by the sea, as Nicephorus writes (p. 41), where he found a fishing boat well rigged.[455] Justinian sailed along the coast of

449. Theophanes, p.373. —Cedrenus, p.779, "he killed the guards". —Zonaras III, 326. —Sathas, p.116.

450. Nicephorus, p.41.

451. According to Dunlop, p.172 "Valgiltzis" is not a name but a title, meaning perhaps "governor", *Bolgitsi.*

452. These two quotations support my convinction that Ibousir was not the Khagan of the Khazars. Ibousir was received the following year with great honours in Constantinople (see *S.O.C.* 40. 4 and 7). Justinian would never have received the Khagan with great honours, since the Khagan had attempted to kill him.

453. According to Ghevond, ed. Ghazarian, he was called Tuheg. Filler, *Questiones Leontii,* mentions him as *Truel.*

454. Almost all Byzantine chroniclers write "Tomin" with the exception of Cedrenus, p.779, who writes "Stomion". As Gregoire rightly observes (*op. cit.*) the reference could not be to Tomi-Constanza since Justinian had in mind to sail along the coast of Crimea. Hence, Cedrenus is right when he writes "Stomion" and Yannopoulos rightly observes that by this Cedrenus means the mouth of the river Kouban, or the south entrance of the canal of Cimmerian Bosporus (Kerts).

455. "Well-rigged fishing boat...", Theophanes, p.373. —"he boarded a ship together with certain other men...", Nicephorus, p.41.

Assada[456] and arrived at "Symbolon" which was the northern port of Cherson.[457] Not daring to enter Cherson himself for fear of being recognised, Justinian sent in secret one of his men to ask certain of his friends to join him, namely, Varisvakurius,[458] or Varasvakurius and his brother Sulivan, Stephanos, Moropoulos and Theophilus. Justinian had decided to go to Bulgaria to seek the assistance of king Tervel. However, their ship was too small to brave the Black Sea and they decided to sail along the coast. Coming to the lighthouse of Cherson, they by-passed Necropela, yet upon reaching the mouth of the rivers Dneister and Dneiper they encountered a terrible storm which made them fear of their lives so dreadful was the danger they faced.

One of Justinian's followers by the name of Myakis then said to him: "Lo! we are to die, master... vow to God that if you are saved and regain your throne you will not take revenge...". Justinian in anger cried that if he took pity on anyone God should immediately strike him.[459]

When the tempest abated, they managed to enter the mouth of the river Istros (Danube).

3

From the Danube, Justinian sent Stephanos to Tervel, the

456. This reference to "Assada" has not been clarified as yet. However, Anastasius who translated Theophanes (p.238) and De Boor who edited Anastasius (p.373 notes 16-17) write *"Iuxta Littora"* i.e., near the shore. Consequently it refers either to a cape, or some other part of the peninsula.

457. Yannopoulos, *op.cit.* Given the fact that Cherson was a coastal city, I presume this must have been a small port in the vicinity of Cherson. According to Vasiliev, *op.cit.*, p.81, the place is today's Balaclava.

458. Theophanes, p.373. —Nicephorus, p.41. —Zonaras, III, 326. —Leo the Grammarian p.167. —Sathas, p.117. Nothing is known about Varisvakurius or Varasvakurius. According to Yannopoulos the name does not seem Greek. It is possible that he was a citizen of Cherson who became a close friend of Justinian. Guilland, on the other hand, maintains that he was an old friend of Justinian's who followed him into exile. No source confirms this version.

459. Theophanes, p.373. —Cedrenus, pp.779-780. —Zonaras, III, 326.

"Master of Bulgaria"[460] with the request that he grant his assistance so that Justinian might regain his throne "and keep the ancestral kingship". Stephanos was empowered to give Tervel many gifts and to offer Justinian's daughter in marriage. The question, however, arises: who was this daughter? Surely not one of Theodora's whom Justinian had married only a few months before. Consequently, we must conclude that Justinian had married twice yet no source mentions this fact. Only one source[461] refers to a certain Eudocia, though no information has come to us about her or her daughter. If indeed Justinian had married before, then his wife must have died before he was deposed and had therefore been burried as an empress in the Church of the Holy Apostles. Hence his daughter must have been then 14 to 20 years old. Again, no information can be found concerning the consumation of this marriage.

Tervel, who had succeeded Asparuch in 701-2, received Justinian with great honours. Theophanes writes that Justinian "moved all his (Tervel's) subjects, Bulgars and Slavs".[462] I do not know why Theophanes distinguishes between the two, since the Slavs were the subjects of the Bulgars. It is true that according to the sources Justinian tried to convince Tervel to mobilise other sectors of the domain; however, on the evidence of an early Bulgar inscription Tervel is presented as having said

460. Theophanes, p.374. —Nicephorus, pp.41-2. —Zonaras, III, 326-7. Here, I would like to make the following observations: 1) Both Theophanes and Nicephorus refer to the "master" of Bulgaria, whereas George the Monk refers to him as the "prince". No one calls him "king". 2) Why was Stephanos sent as delegate? Was it because in the past he had held a high position? Hence, could this have truly been the general Stephanos, Eparch of Constantinople?

461. Grierson, *The Tombs and Obits*. According to Grierson, p.51, Justinian married a certain Eudocia, who died before 695 and was for this reason buried in the Mausoleum of Justinian. Reiske shares this view in the *De Cer.*, II, 767 of Constantine Porphyrogennetus.

462. Theophanes, p.374. —George the Monk, p.732. —Nicephorus, p.42. —Michael the Syrian, II, 478. —According to *S.O.C.* Justinian married the daughter of Tervel and not of the Khagan of the Khazars. This, however, is in total contradiction with the writings of all the Byzantine chroniclers.

that his relatives in Salonica did not trust the Emperor with the mutilated nose.[463]

Justinian spent the winter of 704-5 in the land of the Bulgars. Meantime, Tervel gathered "an innumerable crowd" (George the monk) and when spring came Justinian and Tervel marched towards Constantinople.[464]

463. Beševliev, *Die Protobulgarischen*, pp.97, 108. —*Ibid.*, concerning the reward received by Tervel. Concerning the Kouver affair, see Vol. IV, Ch. IV and above, Ch. II, sec. 2. of the present work. It has been characteristic of the Slavic school to maintain that the Bulgars settled near Salonica. However, as I have already written, the Keramesion valley cannot be identified with any spot near Salonica.

464. Paparrigopoulos, p.266. —Bury, II, 360. —Dujčev, *Protobulgares*, p.153 and note 33. —Runciman, p.30. —Obolensky, p.65. —Dujčev, *La Seconda*.

CHAPTER X

RESTORATION OF JUSTINIAN II

Justinian's restoration constitutes one of the most curious events in the long history of Byzantium. As I have repeatedly mentioned, the mutilation of a person's nose aimed at hindering him from assuming ever again an official position and especially the throne. It was inconceivable to the Byzantines that a person thus disfigured could be their king. Nevertheless, this did occur with Justinian. If I am not mistaken, it was the only time that a person with a mutilated nose assumed the throne in Byzantium.

1

Justinian and Tervel marched towards Constantinople. This fact raises many questions which are not easy to answer.

1. When did this happen? Our only information comes from Theophanes who writes "in the following year...". This implies that Justinian spent his winter in Bulgaria and when spring came he undertook his march. This seems the most reasonable hypothesis in view of the fact that the Bulgars were mainly horsemen and therefore needed provisions for their horses. Consequently, they must have started off in April or May.[465]

2. What kind of an army and how many men did they have? On this point the sources disagree. Some say "innumerable people..."[466] The Patridographers of Constantinople state that Tervel gave Justinian 15,000 men. As far as the composition of the army is concerned, all the Byzantine chroniclers state that

465. Paparrigopoulos maintains, III, 266, that they departed in March 705, however, he does not mention his sources. —Beševliev, in connection with the reward, etc.

466. George the Monk, p.732. —Glykas, p.521. —Manasses, 3960 "myriad legions..."

besides his followers, only Bulgars and Slavs[467] followed Justinian. In contrast, other sources mention the Khazars and the Bulgars.[468] Curiouly enough, Ghevond writes that Truheg, brother of Justinian's wife, was killed fighting before the gates of Constantinople (though nowhere do we find a reference that a battle was given before the gates of the city), while the Patridographers state that it was Theodora's brother Ibousir-Glavan who went to Constantinople.

3. The distance between the then capital of Bulgaria and Constantinople was approximately 400 kilometres. Justinian and the Bulgars passed over the mountain range of Hemus and entered the large province of Thrace. The theme of Thrace had already been organised. One wonders why there was no resistance offered against this march which to the Byzantines must have seemed like an invasion There were fortified towns, passes, strongholds, etc. so how did the officers of the theme and the Byzantine army react? How did Tiberius and his able generals, like his famous brother Heraclius, respond to the situation? What measures did they undertake to check the march of this army which went on for several months? No answer is provided to these questions by the chroniclers. However, if they did start out in April-May, up until August when they arrived there must have been some attempt during these months to stop Justinian's advance. The reaction could not have been very drastic and it was also possible that some divisions of the Thracian army joined with Justinian.

While Justinian was marching towards Constantinople, young Leo (subsequently Emperor Leo III the Isaurian),[469] who dwelt in Thrace, went to meet Justinian and offered him 500 sheep. According to Theophanes, during the first part of his

467. I cannot understand why Theophanes and the other chroniclers who rely on him distinguish between the Bulgars and the Slavs, while in other parts of their chronicles they state that the Slavs had been subjugated by the Bulgars.

468. Ghevond, *op.cit.*, p.17. —Bar Hebraeus, *Chr. Syriacum*, p.119. —*Insidoriana Continuationes*. —A. Dandulo, *Chronicon*, p.107.

469. Theophanes, p.391 "by descent from Germanicea, in truth though from Isauria".

reign Justinian had sent Leo's family to settle in Mesembria[470] of Thrace and it is said that there Leo grew up. Justinian gave him the title of "spatharius"[471] and held him in favour. Another source,[472] however, questions Leo's descent and the manner of his enlistment. This issue does not concern us at present and therefore I shall not enter into any further details.

Justinian, Tervel and their army reached Constantinople in all probability during the early part of August 705 and camped before the walls between the Gate of Charisios[473] and the Gate of Blachernae.

However, the Chronicle of Cumont states that they arrived at the "Golden Gate", i.e., at the furthermost west gate of the city. This version is not correct because it is in contradiction with that stated in the Byzantine sources.

For a period of three days, Justinian tried to convince the citizens of Constantinople to receive him into the city, but they treated him contemptuously and did not consent to come to an

470. City of Thrace, at the limits of lower Moesia, northwest of Anchialos on the Black Sea. Strabo says that it was built by the Megareans. Today it belongs to Bulgaria.

471. Dignity given by insignia. See Bury, *The Imperial Administrative System*, p.20 ff. Originally the title was given to the person bearing the king's sword, or to a noble particularly of the military caste, in a way his aide-de-camp. With time, it became a purely honorary title. See Yannopoulos, *La Societé Profane*, pp.54-5. —Oikonomides, *La Liste de Preséance Byzantine*, p.297 ff.

472. John of Damascus, in a letter to the Emperor Theophilus, Migne, *P.G.* Vol. 85, p.358, writes that Leo who was a worker was enlisted by the general of the Anatolikon theme Masisinnus in Isauria and that he was made spatharius by the Emperor Theodosius. Masisinnus is named by George the Monk (p.737) and Cedrenus (p.789) Sisinnius. Both share a similar view with respect to Leo's enlistment. Indeed, there was a patrician and general by the name of Sisinnius in those days (Theophanes, p.400). However, Cedrenus writes that he was given the title of spatharius by Justinian II, whereas George the Monk says by Theodosius. It is possible that he was enlisted by the general Sisinnius, served in Thrace where his parents settled and was given the title by Justinian as a reward for services which he might have rendered.

473. Charisiou, today Endirne Kapi or Gate of Adrianoupolis. Charisios was one of the leaders of the Blues when this wall was built (*S.O.C*, p.258). The same source on p.182 refers to Charisios as the Demarch of the Greens. See also Janin, *Constantinople*, p.263.

agreement with him.[474] Justinian, who knew well the fortifications and weak spots of the city, together with some of his followers managed to enter through the aqueduct and crawl to the city.[475] It appears that there was a case of treason, for the sources mention something to that effect without going into any details.[476] Justinian emerged out of the aqueduct at a place called Deuteron[477] (second) where at a later date his bust was placed[478] together with that of his wife. Nearby was the Church of St. Anne.[479] It is possible that a battle took place between Justinian's followers and the guards of the city because his brother-in-law Truheg was killed and, as the sources state, Justinian had "encamped for a short while near the palace of Blachernae"[480] that is, in the northeastern part of the city.

474. Nicephorus, p.42. —Theophanes, p.374. —Zonaras, III, 327.

475. Nicephorus, p.42. —George the Monk, p.732. —Sathas, *Synopsis*, p. 117. —Leo the Grammarian, p.168. —Manasses, 3965. —Theophanes, p.374.

476. George the Monk, p.732. —Leo the Grammarian, p.168. —Paparrigopoulos, p.266.

477. Leo the Grammarian, p.168. —*S.O.C*, p.244. —Codinus, pp.576-7. These maintain that the place was then given the name "Deuteron" (second) because Justinian left from there and reigned for a second time. This information is not correct because this spot was known already for over a century. See Procopius, ed. Haury, *De Aedificiis*, I, 3, p.21. —Janin, *Constantinople*, pp.314-7. —Vyzantios, *Constantinople*, p.405. According to Ducange this spot was called Deuteron because it was two stadiums away from the wall of Constantine. Van Millingen (pp.74-8) maintains that it was a district which communicated with the second military Gate. It is possible since all the sources state that it was near the Church of St. Anne that it lay north of the Church of the Holy Apostles and between the walls of Constantine and Theodosius.

478. *S.O.C.*, p.40.

479. Church of St. Anne. According to the Patridographers, *S.O.C.*, p.244, this church was built by Justinian II because his wife had seen a vision of St. Anne during her pregnancy. This information is erroneous. The church was probably built by Justinian I (see Procopius, *op.cit.*, I, 3, 12) and was situated near the aqueduct from where Justinian II emerged into the northern parts of Constantinople. Janin, *Eglises*, 39-41.

480. The Palace of Blachernae had not as then been built as a palace. Near the church there was an appartment where the Emperor could rest and receive his official guests on days when celebrations took place there. Only during the 10th century the building of the palace as such, which was to become the

Justinian's army entered Constantinople through the Gate of Blachernae. However, there must have been some resistance for Theophanes writes that it was in the following year that Justinian "enjoyed the crown". It is, therefore, unknown how long he stayed at Blachernae. Apsimarus was still in the city and did not abandon it till the situation became truly hopeless. It has been said that Apsimarus was dethroned on August 21, 705.[481] Many questions arise with respect to these events: It is possible that Apsimarus had to flee Constantinople and to seek refuge in the town Apollonia.[482] Another question concerns the date of Justinian's restoration to the throne. In the past historians accepted the year 705. Given the fact that certain coins of Justinian have been discovered which were minted in Constantinople and which bear the date XX, i.e., 20th year of Justinian, the question is posed whether these events did not occur in 704.[483]

Imperial years were calculated on the basis of the date of coronation of the Emperor or co-Emperor. We do not exactly know the date of Justinian's coronation, or whether he had ever been crowned co-Emperor. As I wrote in Chapter I, the latest date for the coronation that is acceptable is 685. Since the years of reign of Leontius and of Tiberius were not recognised, for the true Emperor was till Justinian, the 20th year of his reign is 704-5. Theophanes complicates matters for he dates the

permanent residence of the Emperor, was begun. See Janin, *Constantinople*, p.124 ff. It is perhaps for this reason that the chroniclers and especially Nicephorus and Theophanes write "he encamped" and not entered or occupied.

481. Necrologion of the Emperors in *Chronicon Altinate*. —Grierson, *Tombs and Obits*, p.51. —*Ibid.*, *Catalogue*, I, 598. —Head, *On the Date*.

482. There are many cities called Apollonia. Goar in his edition of Cedrenus agrees that it was the one near Delphi. There is another one in Epirus and another between Salonica and Amphipolis. Dujčev, *La Seconda Ascesa*, decides for Apollonia on the Black Sea, today Sozoupolis of Bulgaria. Dujcev's view is acceptable because this city, which was an old colony of the Milesians, was situated within the province of Thrace, and was a coastal stronghold so he could go there by sea and organise it as the base for an armed struggle.

483. Grierson, *op.cit.* —Head, *op.cit.* —Breckenridge, *The Numismatic Iconography*. —Dujčev, *op.cit.*

conquest of Constantinople in the year 6197, 7th year of Tiberius' reign and 22nd of Abd al-Malik, and the coronation in the year 6198, 1st year of Justinian's and of the Caliph's Walid. As far as Abd al-Malik is concerned we know that he assumed the Caliphate in May 685[484] and died in October 705, 21st year of his reign,[485] when his son Walid assumed the throne. Yet, when does the year 6197 start and when does it end? Some maintain that originally the Byzantine year began in March and that subsequently the Byzantines decided to follow the chronology of Indiction which begins on the 1st of September. Theophanes follows the first system[486] on the basis of which the year 6197 would start in March 705. On the basis of the other system, however, the year 6197 would start on the 1st of September 704. In any case, whether we accept the one or the other version, it is a fact that Justinian entered Constantinople in July or August of the year 6197, i.e., in 705. Moreover, according to the sources the conquest of Constantinople occurred before Abd al-Malik's death, hence before October 705. Therefore, we can agree that it was the 20th year of Justinian's reign, on the evidence of the coins, or the 7th of Tiberius on the evidence of Theophanes.[487] However, the question remains, for this chronology is not consistent with what Theophanes writes subsequently, namely that Justinian reigned for 6 years. If Justinian died in November 711, then he reigned for more than 6 years.

2

Indeed, Justinian loaded Tervel with gifts as he had promised. Tervel was camped before the Gate of Blachernae.[488] The question to be asked is whether Justinian offered these gifts and royally received his ally before or after killing Leontius and

484. Zambaur, Manuel de Généalogie, p.3.
485. Caetani, *Chronographia*, p.1035, where the relevant bibliography.
486. Grumel, *La Chronologie*, p.127.
487. Bury, II, 360 and note 2. —Ostrogorsky, *History*, p.142.
488. Nicephorus, p.42. —Amandos, I, 339.

Tiberius. The order in which Nicephorus relates these events supports the first version, though Theophanes and the other Byzantine chroniclers favour the second view. If we accept that Leontius and Apsimarus were killed on the 2nd of February 706, how can we reconcile this with the fact that Justinian allowed his allies to pass five months encamped before Constantinople? In this event, not only would he have had to supply them with provisions, but also to watch that they did not take to looting. We must not forget that the Bulgars were not in those days a civilised people. Therefore, I am led to the conclusion that as soon as Justinian became master of the city and restored some order, he hastened to rid himself of his allies who must have begun to be a burden to him by this time.

Justinian invited Tervel and welcomed him with an official reception in the golden-roofed Basilica[489] of Constantinople.[490] The Patridographers and *Suidae Lexicon* inform us that[491] once Tervel was seated next to Justinian "in the golden-roofed Basilica... Tervel laid down the shield which he held in war as well as his whip... and both were covered with the offerings... and his spear which also was extended on the ground was covered in length and height by a silk garment..."[492] The term "pacta" probably refers to the yearly dues which had been

489. They used to give this name to an edifice of the 4th district not far from Milion, on the right side of the Mese (central avenue of the city) and in the direction of the Forum (square) of Constantine the Great. It is not known when this Basilica was built. The Patridographers (*S.O.C.*, pp.171-2) refer to it as the "golden-domed Basilica" and write that in it was a statue of Heraclius, another of Justinian II (in a kneeling position) and a third of his wife (Janin, *Constantinople*, p.157).

490. Petcova-Cancova, in *Bulgarians*, wrongly maintains that Justinian received Tervel in the palace where he presented him with the gifts and proclaimed him Caesar. All the sources, the Patridographers, Suidae and even Nicephorus ("he ordered the people", this could not take place in the palace) write that the celebration took place in the "golden-roofed Basilica". Beševliev, concerning the reward, etc. rightly observes that on the basis of the sources it follows that Tervel received the gifts in the Basilica.

491. *Suidae Lexicon*, under "Bulgars", Vol. I, pp.383-4. —*S.O.C.*, pp.39-40 and 171-2. —Codinos in *Migne, P.G.* Vol. 157, 677-680.

492. I have attempted a synthesis and abridgement of the various descriptions contained in the sources.

agreed upon between Constantine IV and Aspraruch in 681 and which Justinian had revoked, as I have mentioned in Chapter II.[493] Justinian must have paid Tervel's soldiers handsomely for in *Suidae* it is written: "and having filled the coffers with gold and silver, he began to give to the soldiers loading their right hand with gold and their left with silver...". The king put upon Tervel a royal mantle[494] and proclaimed him "Caesar".[495] This title, which was second to that of king, was usually given to relatives by blood or marriage but did not imply anymore that the person who bore the title would also be the heir to the throne. This honour had a very great significance for Tervel, for he was being recognised by the Byzantine court as the legal ruler of an independent state. It is noteworthy that this title was given for the first time to a foreign prince. However, the bearer of this title did not have imperial power but a right to the relevant honours. After the proclamation Justinian ordered the people to kneel before him and to hail him.

Regarding the promise of giving his daughter in marriage to Tervel no source states that this was fulfilled by Justinian. I believe that Besevliev is right when he states that Tervel was fully satisfied by being proclaimed Caesar and that the terms upon which he had agreed to help Justinian were, besides the gifts, the following: 1) The renewal of the old agreement concerning the yearly peace dues; 2) the recognition of Tervel as the legal ruler of an independent Bulgaria.

Opinion is divided on another matter which is in need of clarification. Nicephorus and Theophanes write that after giving the gifts Justinian dismissed Tervel. In contrast we are informed by George the Monk, Leo the Grammarian as well as Cedrenus that Justinian ceded to Tervel a Byzantine region, "the so-called Zagoria". This information seems improbable for after a short

493. Beševliev, *op.cit.* —Dujčev, *Protobulgares.* —Ostrogorsky, *op.cit.*, p.142.

494. I presume he means mantle for the garment was of silk with purple straps. See Lopez, *Silk Industry.*

495. Nicephorus, p.42. —Theophanes, p.374 "royal utensils". —Besevliev, *op.cit.* —Amandos, *op.cit.*, I, 339-40. —Dvornik, *Les Slaves*, p.10. —Runciman, *op.cit.*, p.31.

time, when the Bulgars and the Emperor Theodosius concluded a treaty in 717, in the face of the Arabian preparations for the great attack on Constantinople, the Byzantines ceded to the Bulgars "the so-called Zagoria".[496] Hence, this information, which we do not encounter in those chroniclers who lived at a time much closer to the events — Nicephorus, Theophanes, the Patridographers, *Suidae Lexicon* — must have been an incidental note in the margins of George the Monk's chronicle which was later incorporated in the text and picked up by Cedrenus, Leo the Grammarian and the later chroniclers.[497] Many contemporary historians maintain that George the Monk had this information from a very reliable[498] yet unknown to us source. If we accept this hypothesis then we must ask how was it that the region was ceded then and again after a lapse of ten years?

3

With respect to Justinian's restoration many questions arise which have neither been resolved nor even considered. Surely, it must have taken Justinian some time to re-establish himself in power and to become master of the situation. Yet the length of this time is not given or even indicated in any of the sources. The sources only mention his acts of persecution and revenge against his enemies. It is certain that after Tiberius' escape the situation became extremely difficult. The Senate was against Justinian; Tiberius' brother, the able general Heraclius, as well as other generals who had distinguished themselves during Tiberius' reign were hostile to Justinian. The Deme of the Blues which had played a major part in his dethronement and the rise of

496. According to Runciman (p.31) this is the region on the east side of Hemus almost up to the bay of Burgas. The towns Mesembria, Anchialos, etc., remained Byzantine.

497. Besevliev, *op.cit.* —Amandos, p.340, who mentions the fact but wonders how this region was given again to the Bulgars in 717. —Head, *Justinian II*, p.123.

498. Zlatarsky, *op.cit.*, p.16. —Dvornik, *op.cit.*, p.10. —Angelov, *La Formation.*

Leontius to power,[499] irrespective of the troubles it had to face when Tiberius assumed the throne,[500] naturally feared Justinian's revenge. Outside the walls of Constantinople were Justinian's allies, a horde of barbarian Bulgars and others who undoubtedly must have engaged in some form of looting, in spite of Tervel's friendship for Justinian. Within the city, followers of Leontius and of Tiberius must still have existed.

Justinian hastened to arrest Leontius, who was still cloistered in the monastery of Dalmatius and put him into prison.[501] However, since Justinian intended to kill Leontius, one wonders why he did not do so immediately given the fact that while alive, even if mutilated, Leontius would continue to be a threat to him. To this question I can find no reasonable answer. Justinian began to search for Tiberius and ordered his immediate and ruthless pursuit.[502] How long this lasted is unknown. Justinian ordered the arrest of many generals. Heraclius was arrested in Thrace "together with all those nobles who had allied themselves under his leadership..."[503] This sentence gives me the impression that Heraclius together with other nobles had either revolted or were preparing to revolt. For, how come he was in Thrace when, as we know, he was the general of the East and his seat must have been Ceasaria? Secondly, what was the meaning of this "coalition" between him and the other nobles? It is possible that as soon as Justinian and the Bulgars entered the theme of Thrace, where the army of the theme either did not put up a resistance or joined forces with him, Tiberius called his brother to help him. Heraclius must not have been in Constantiople when the city fell, for, being such a good general, he would have better organised the city's defense. Therefore, he must have been in Thrace together with the other nobles organising a revolt and an attack against Justinian. Justinian

499. See Chapter VI.

500. See Chapters VII and VIII.

501. Nicephorus, p.42.

502. Theophanes, p.375. —Zonaras, III, 327. —George the Monk, p.732.

503. Theophanes, p.375. —Nicephorus (p.42) writes: "Heraclius... general of the Anatolikon (I suppose theme)... and the other nobles and adjutants of his...".

arrested them all and ordered that they be hung from the walls as an example to be avoided.

There is another point in Theophanes in need of clarification. He writes: "and having made a search inland, many of those he found who had been guilty of the act, and others who were not, were similarly punished". What does Theophanes mean by this sentence which he probably copied from another source? In all probability by "guilty" he means those who had united against him, whereas by the "others" he means the nobles who were not involved in the insurrection. At any rate, it appears that the terrorism imposed by Justinian was terrible[504] and the extermination of the nobles and of the ruling class fearful.[505] If one is to believe what the chroniclers narrate, the situation appears to have been impossible to bear. Nicephorus reports that he would invite people to supper and then kill them, or put them in sacks and then drown them in the sea. Theophanes adds a countless list of many political and military victims. The same is reported in other Byzantine sources, one of which states that he had become a "maniac".[506] The citizens lived in fear and terror and many of them escaped to the barbarians(?).[507]

Finally, Justinian managed to arrest Tiberius and brought him to Constantinople. Tiberius presented a problem to him for, were he to punish him by mutilation of the nose and exile, his safety on the throne was not insured, as proved by his own experience and course of action. Justinian knew that he was not loved by the people. Though he had many friends, he had still more enemies. The Deme of the Blues had sided with Leontius

504. Nicephorus, p.43 "much fear and torture". —Cedrenus, p.781. —George the Monk, p.733 "The city was overtaken with fear...". —Leo the Grammarian, pp.168-9 "and he put many to death so that great fear was spread".

505. Nicephorus, p.43 "attributing guilt to the nobles..." Sathas, *Synopsis*, p.117 "he pegged the members of the Senate..." Michael the Syrian, 11478 "he killed many notables and thus deprived the Empire of its nobility". *Chronicon ad Annum 846*, p.175. —Paul the Deacon, VI, 31. —Bedae, *Chronicon*, p.107.

506. Glykas, p.521.

507. George the Monk, p.733.

and the Deme of the Greens with Tiberius; consequently it was imperative that Justinian do away with the persons to whom he ran the risk of again losing his throne and he decided to hold a festal public execution.

He ordered that horse-races be organised at the Hippodrome. On the appointed day Leontius and Apsimarus-Tiberius, bound in chains, walked through the city in a triumphal procession. This was the famous criminal procession for those condemned which was intended as an exemplary punishment, for it disgraced the criminals even more in the eyes of the people who threw insults at them and ridiculed them.[508] Justinian sat on "a throne" in the Hippodrome. The accused were thrown at the king's feet one of which he placed on Leontius' neck, the other on Tiberius'. The people, or the head of the Demes, began to shout: "The young lion and the dragon shalt thou trample under foot".[509] Then he ordered the execution of the two ex-Emperors. They were led to the place of execution *(Kynegion)*[510] and were beheaded. According to a chronicle[511] their bodies were thrown into the sea, but were drawn out later and buried in a Church on the island *Prote* in the sea of Marmara.

When did the execution take place? Byzantine sources provide no information or clues on the matter. Only the above mentioned chronicle in the section on the necrologion of Byzantine emperors states that Leontius was executed on the 15th of February and Apsimarus Tiberius after the 7th year of his reign. Therefore, we may accept as the date of their death the

508. See Kukules, R., *Mockery in the Byzantine Era*, in Byzantina-Metabyzantina, I, 2, p.75 ff (New York, 1949). —Dujčev, *La Seconda Ascesa*, pp.558-9.

509. Theophanes, p.375. —Dujčev, *op.cit.*. —Head, *Justinian II*, p.116. The entire phrase comes from Psalm 91 in the Bible.

510. *Kynegion* was a place of execution near the Palace of the Mangana, Janin, *op.cit.*, pp.349-50. —According to Van Millingen (p.251) the place was behind Deirmen Kapousi. It was an amphitheatre built by Severus (*Chronicon Paschale*, I, 495). Animal races took place there up to the time of Justinian I. See also Vyzantios, *Constantinople*, I, 598.

511. *Chronicon Altinate et Gradense*, p.108.

15th of February 706,[512] for they were both executed on the same day, hence the chronology applies to Tiberius as well. The question, however, remains for me as to why did Justinian wait for so many months after Leontius' arrest until he had arrested Tiberius too and then proceed with their execution? I shall attempt a hypothesis. Could it be that Justinian had no intention at first of killing Leontius who, besides ordering his mutilation and exile, had behaved well towards him not having undertaken any further hostile actions, but that as soon as the nobles who supported him entered into a conspiracy with Heraclius he decided to execute him for reasons of greater security?

Justinian's behaviour towards the Patriarch Callinicus was most cruel. He accused him of slander against his person during Leontius' revolution and therefore ordered his blinding and exile in Rome.[513] The monk Cyrus was appointed as Patriarch for he had prophesied to Justinian when he was passing from Amastris, where Cyrus' monastery was, that he would reign anew.[514]

All the chroniclers refer to the brutality of Justinian's persecutions. Modern historians accept this which they attribute to a mania for revenge aiming at the extermination of all those who had brought about his deposition.[515] Yet, with the exception of Brooks, no other historian ever mentions the positive acts of Justinian. For example, he spared Theodosius, Tiberius' son, though the custom was to kill the male issue of deposed kings so as to avoid future problems (revenge, claims, etc.). Theodosius, who seems to have been an excellent person,

512. Grierson, *Tombs and Obits*, p.51. Given the fact that Tiberius ascended the throne in the last months of 698 he was beheaded in the last months of 705.

513. Nicephorus, p.42. —Theophanes, p.375. —Zonaras, III, 321. —George the Monk, p.733. —Sathas, *Synopsis*, p.117. —Paul the Deacon, VI, 31. —Bedae, *Chronica*, p.317. —Dandulo, *Chronicon*, p.107.

514. Nicephorus, p.42 and all the Byzantine chroniclers. Bedae writes abbot of a monastery in Pontus. Amastris was a city of Paphlagonia on the Black Sea, today Amasra.

515. Amandos, *op.cit.*, I, 340. —Ostrogorsky, *op.cit.*, p.143. —Brooks, *op. cit.*, II, 411 who also mentions his good acts. See also Follieri, in *E.E.B.S*, Vol. 39-40/1972-3, p.348 and note 7.

was allowed to live and later became Bishop of the Metropolis of Ephesus.[516] He played a very important part during the reigns of Leo III and Constantine V and headed the synod convened in Constantinople by the latter.[517] Theodosius was accused by Pope Gregory II in letter addressed to Leo III of being responsible for inciting him to iconoclasm.[518] In the course of the 7th Ecumenical Synod (Nicaea) he was anathematised as an iconoclast. Justinian did not harm this important man, as a matter of fact we are informed that he actually helped him. In Constantinople there were 6,000 Arab captives. Justinian ordered that they be released and sent to Syria.[519] These acts do not show a man possessed by mania. Undoubtedly, Justinian wished to revenge himself upon all those who had deposed him and threatened his life. The magnitude of the number of victims may be due to the conspiracy which was formed immediately after his return to the throne and to the negative reaction against his person. It could also be that the extermination of nobles mentioned by the sources was simply a continuation of the anti-aristocratic policy pursued during the first part of his reign which led to the uprising of the Blues and to his dethronement.[520]

4

We do not know exactly when Justinian sent to bring back his wife from the land of the Khazars. The problem is not the date as such but the events which have been complicated by Theophanes' imagination. He writes that Justinian sent a

516. Le Quien, *Oriens Christianus*, I, 683-4 (Paris, 1740).

517. Mansi, XII, 578. —Theophanes, p. 427. —Zonaras, III, 347.

518. Epistle of Pope Gregory II to the Emperor Leo... "In spite of what he told you (the Patriarch Germanos) you listened to the unlawful, foolish man of Ephesus, son of Apsimarus..." Mansi, XII, 967.

519. Michael the Syrian, II, 478. —Bar Hebraeus, *Chr. Syriacum*, p.119. —Brooks, *op.cit.* II, 411.

520. Levtchenko, "The Blues and Greens in Byzantium". *Viz. Vr.*, Vol. 26/1947, pp.182-3 (in Russian. I consulted a Greek translation). —Head, *Justinian*, II, p.118.

"fleet" to bring back his wife. Many ships were sunk. When the Khagan heard this he sent a message to Justinian saying: "Oh! foolish man, were you not satisfied with two or three ships to bring back your wife, but caused the death of so many? Or did you think that you would have to fight to take her back? Now your child has been born so do send for them". Justinian dispatched the cubicularius[521] Theophilactus who brought back Theodora and "Tiberius" her son and they were crowned. This is the story given by Theophanes and by some Syrian chroniclers.[522] Besides Theophanes and Cedrenus, who relies on him, no other Byzantine source gives this version. On the contrary, all sources simply state that Justinian sent and brought back from Khazaria his wife and son. That he did not sent a fleet at once is only natural, for an expedition of this kind required some time for preparations, and presupposed that Justinian was already master of the situation.

Justinian crowned Theodora Empress and his son was proclaimed co-Emperor and crowned.[523] Nowhere is it mentioned that Tiberius was also crowned by the Patriarch, a custom instituted by then.

There are three issues in need of examination: 1. Why was Justinian's son named Tiberius? 2. When was he crowned co-Emperor? 3. When did Ibousir-Glavan, the brother of Theodora, come to Constantinople?

1. No one seems to know why the child was given this name. Justinian of course was not present at the baptism hence the name was chosen by Theodora. It has been maintained that as Theodora had no news of her husband and probably thought that he was dead, she chose this name in the hope that the then

521. *Cubiculum* in the Byzantine period was called the apartment and more specially the bedroom of the king. The Cubicularius was entrusted with its care. He had to be a person in the absolute confidence of the king. Originally he was a higher official of the court. Later the title became purely honorary. See Yannopoulos, *op.cit.*, pp.72-3.

522. Theophanes, p.375. —Michael the Syrian, II, 478. —Agapius, 238/498. —Bar Hebraeus, *op.cit.*, p.119.

523. Nicephorus, p.43. —Zonaras, III, 328. —Theophanes, p.375. —Sathas, *Synopsis*, p.117. —Leo the Grammarian, p.169.

Emperor Tiberius would relent towards the child and not treat it harshly.[524] This explanation is not based on any source; it is, however, possible since the baptism took place in a faraway barbarious land and by people with different customs. I confess that I have been unable to find another explanation other than that Theodora did not know of any other imperial names and chose the only one which she knew.

2. When did the coronation of Tiberius as co-Emperor take place? It is possible that it took place the day after his arrival in Constantinople. Theophanes reports the year 6198 = 705-6. The Syrian chroniclers range from 1016 to 1017 = 705-6.[525] The matter is complicated by the minting of coins which bear the portraits of Justinian and Tiberius with the date XX (20). If we accept that Justinian resumed power towards the end of August 705, then his twentieth year of reign would soon be up. Some time was needed before Justinian felt secure in his throne so as to send for his wife and son, hence they could not have arrived in Constantinople before the end of 705 or the beginning of 706. The coronation must have taken place early in 706. In this event, how could the new coins bear the year XX? If they had been minted before how could Justinian have known that he was the father of a son named Tiberius since the sources state that he was informed of this only when he sent to bring back his wife? Irrespective of this, the portrait of Tiberius on the coins is not that of a babe but of a much older child. The only possible explanation is that the coins were minted at a later stage but bear the year XX as an indication of the continuity of Justinian's reign and of the beginning of Tiberius' from his birth.[526]

3. Ibousir-Glavan's arrival in Constantinople also presents some difficulties. No source mentions the date of his arrival. His stay in Constantinople and the manner of his reception prove that he was not the Khagan of the Khazars who could not stay

524. Head, *Justinian II*, p.120.

525. Michael the Syrian, II, 478. —*Chronicon of the year 1234.* —Agapius (pp.238/498) writes that these happened in the 22nd year of Abd al-Malik, 87th of the Arabs... However, Abd al-Malik reigned for only 21 years.

526. This of course is contrary to Byzantine customs. The beginning of a reign was calculated from the coronation day of the Emperor or co-Emperor.

away from his people for such a long time at a period which was both difficult and fraught with danger. The Arabs were in his neighbourhood and had attacked his country many times. It is only natural to suppose that Ibousir accompanied his sister and nephew to Constantinople in order to bring about a reconciliation between his father the Khagan and Justinian. As I wrote in the previous chapter, the Khagan had come to an agreement with Apsimarus-Tiberius to deliver Justinian to the latter dead or alive. There was fear that Justinian might decide to attack the Khazars as a revenge. It is not known how long Ibousir stayed in Constantinople, but many times did he sit near Justinian in the golden-domed Basilica.[527] The statues of Justinian kneeling and of his wife Theodora were placed there during this period.[528] No other information is given about Ibousir.

Given the state of the sources, these three questions are bound to remain unanswered for the present and only hypotheses can be entertained.

During the second reign of Justinian various coins were minted which at first represented only Justinian's portrait and then both his and his son's. On the reverse, the image of Christ reappears. The coins were more or less similar with a few differences in the features of Christ and of Justinian. All had the same composition and official weight of gold as before.[529]

527. See above note 486.

528. "Brief chronological representations" *S.O.C.*, p.40. —Codinus in *Migne, P.G.* Vol. 157, pp.677-680. —Dunlop, *op.cit*, p.173, who speaks about the "Khagan" though the source to which he refers does not mention anything of the sort.

529. Grierson, *op.cit.* — Breckenridge, *The Numismatic Chronology.* — Bellinger A., *The Copper, etc.*

CHAPTER XI

ECCLESIASTICAL POLICY

Although Justinian imposed terrorism after his return because of the reaction expressed towards his resumption of power, he tried to follow a conciliatory religious policy. He wished to maintain friendly relations with the Western Church and to smooth over the impression which had been created in the past that he desired at all costs to impose his views. Patriarch Paul III, who had played a leading part in the convocation of the Synod in Troullo and the decisions made there, had died some time ago and Patriarch Callinicus who shared the views of his predecessor had been blinded and exiled. Perhaps the new Patriarch had more lenient views and wished to put an end to the disputes with Rome. Hence, he may have tried to influence Justinian to adopt a more conciliatory policy.

1

Pope Sergius who had resisted strongly against the acts of this Synod had also died. His immediate successors did not occupy themselves with this matter neither were they pressed by Constantinople to do so.

On the 1st of March 705, a few months before Justinian's restoration to the throne, a Greek clergyman[530] received the papal crown and the name John VII. He was the son of a higher official named Plato. He was a very educated and eloquent man, but lacked courage.

Justinian sent to the Pope two Metropolitans[531] who carried with them the volumes containing the minutes of the Synod in

530. *L.P.* I, 385 —Grumel, *La Chronologie*, p.431.

531. This information is not confirmed by any source other than *Liber Pontificalis*.

Troullo and a letter of Justinian to the Pope in which the plea was made that the Pope call a Synod of the Western Church. This Synod was to decide which Acts were acceptable and which were not. It was a friendly move and an attempt at compromise on the part of Justinian because it was left to the Westerners to decide what was to be acceptable. No pressure was exerted upon them. Yet, what exactly did happen? It is curious that although only one source writes that "due to human weakness" the Pope did not proceed with any amendments and sent the two Metropolitans back to their king, modern historians disagree strongly about the results of this embassy. It has been maintained[532] that the implications of this phrase are that the Pope agreed to more than what was demanded of him but that he never signed. Most historians[533] maintain that the Pope was hesitant and finally did not accept the proposal.

I do not know what happened precisely but one thing is certain: that the person who wrote *The Life of Pope John* was violently opposed to the Acts of the Synod in Troullo. His account of the matter is very strange. What we are sure of, however, is that Justinian resumed negotiations on this issue with Pope Constantine. Consequently, either the answer of Pope John was not satisfactory or he refused to discuss the matter. Therefore, Justininan was obliged to take up the matter again.

The date of this embassy is not certain. It is possible that the two Metropolitans went sometime during 707[534] for Pope John died on 18 October 707.

Pope John was succeeded after much discussion on 15 January 708 by the Syrian Sisinnius who was old and an invalid.

532. Duchêsne, in note 10 of the *L.P.*, p.387. —*Ibid.*, L' Eglise au VIe Siécle, p.481. However, he states that there must be some confusion for Justinian resumed negotiations with the successor of John.

533. Brooks, in *C.M.H.*, II, 412. —Bréhier, *Les Derniers Heraclides*, V, 199. —Görres, *Justinian II.* —Hodgkin, *op.cit.*, VI, 370. —Hartmann, *Geschichte Italiens*, II, 77. —Hefélé-Leclercq, *Histoire des Conciles*, III, 578-9. —Mann, *The Lives*, I, 2, pp.109-123. —Romano, *Roma di Fronte*, p.413, who writes that John returned the Acts without approval or disapproval.

534. Duchêsne, in note 11 of *L.P.* p.387.—Romano, *op.cit.*, maintains that it was the year 706.

It is possible that his election was supported by the agents of Constantinople who were trying to find someone who would succumb with more ease to the demands of the Emperor and of the Church of Constantinople. However, Sisinnius was Pope for twenty days only. He died on 4 February 708.[535]

2

The new Pope was a Syrian named Constantine who was a sweet-tempered, tranquil man.[536] He was enthroned on 25th March 708. In those days Rome was under duress because the crops had failed and there was famine. The *Liber Pontificalis* states that this situation lasted for three years.

Meantime, the old feud between Rome and Ravenna,[537] which had been settled by an agreement brought about by Pope Leo and the archbishop of Ravenna, Theodore,[538] was resumed again. The new archbishop of Ravenna, Felix, went to Rome where he was ordained by the Pope in 708 or 709. However, he refused to sign the three, or one of the three documents as required, especially the one concerning the subordination of the Church of Ravenna to the Church of Rome. This caused a complete disruption of relations between the two Churches and had grave consequences for Ravenna.[539]

Pope Constantine received a letter from Justinian extending to him an invitation(?) to Constantinople.[540] Constantine, who wished to smooth relations between Rome and Constantinople, accepted and set off on 5th October 710 from Porto Romano.

535. Mann, *op.cit.*, I, 2, p.126.

536. *L.P.* I, 389.

537. See Vol. III, p.253 of the present history. —Agnelli, *Liber Pontificalis Ecclesiae Ravennatis*, pp.350-1. —Diehl, *Exarchat de Ravenne*, p.271. — Hartmann, *Geschichte*, I, 250.

538. Stratos, Vol. IV, p.129-130. —Jaffé-Wattenbanch, *Regesta*, No 2123.

539. *L.P.* I, 389. —Bertolini, *Roma de Fronte*, p.413.

540. *L.P.* I, 389. —Paul the Deacon, VI, 31. —A. Dandulo, p.107. —Bedae, *Chronica*, p.318. — Jaffé-Wattenbach, No. 2147, p.247-8, who gives the year 709. However, the *L.P.* mentions the 9th Indiction which brings us to 711. It is possible that Jaffé's chronology is closer to fact, though all historians agree that the Pope left on the 5th October, 710. See also Dölger, No. 266.

He was accompanied by the Bishop Nicetas, by the Bishop of Porto George, by many presbyters and officials of the Church of Rome and last but not least by the deacon Gregory who was to succeed him as Pope Gregory II in 715.

The Pope disembarked at the Port of Naples where he was received with great honours by the Exarch surnamed Rizocopus. Then he travelled through Rhegion and probably Sicily where he met the patrician and general of Sicily, Theodore, and thence through Cotrona and Callipolis to Hydruntum, today's Otranto, where he spent the winter.[541]

In Otranto he met the ecclesiastical representative of the area, Theophanes,[542] who had received an *imperial sigillum* commanding that the Pope be welcomed with imperial honours.

Probably early in 711 the Pope boarded the ships which had been placed at his disposal by the Byzantines and sailed towards Constantinople. Near the island Kea he was met and given honours by Theophilos, patrician and general of the Karabisiani.[543] The Pope, escorted by a division of the Byzantine fleet, passed the straits, entered the sea of Marmara and disembarked at the Hebdomon.[544] There he was received by Tiberius, son of Justinian and co-Emperor, by the Senate, by patricians, other notables and by the Patriarch Cyrus at the head of the clergy. A great crowd had gathered. They arrived in

541. *L.P.* I, 390 and note 14. —Jaffe Wattenbach, op.cit. —Duchêsne, *Histoire de l'Eglise* pp.481-2. —Hodgkin, *op.cit.*, VI, 376.

542. *L.P.* I, 390 *"Theophanium regionarium"*. —Hodgkin, *op.cit.*, —Bertolini, *op.cit.*, p.415.

543. As I wrote in Vol. IV, p.145 ff, it is very doubtful whether a "theme of the Karabisiani" was ever founded, or whether this concerned a division of the fleet under the orders of the "general of the Karavon". See Ahrweiler, *Byzance et la Mer*, Paris, 1966. —Antoniades-Bibikou, *Etudes d' Histoire Maritime*, p. 78 ff (Paris, 1966), also wonders whether this Theophilus was not the same as the one who left with Justinian when the boat approached Cherson to take his friends Varisvakurius etc. See Ch. IX, sec. 2. If this is so then this position was given to him as a reward for the services he had rendered.

544. Rhegion lying seven (hence Hebdomon) miles west of Constantinople. See R. Demangel, *L'Hebdomon*, Paris, 1946.

Constantinople in grand procession at the Palace of Placidia[545] where the Pope was to stay. The palace was used as a residence of the Roman legates and of the embassies sent on occasion by the Pope. Justinian was then in Asia Minor.

The meeting of Justinian and the Pope took place in Nicomedea. Justinian, wearing his crown, fell before the Pope's feet and kissed them.[346] On the Sunday the Pope conducted a high mass and Justinian was given the Host by the Pope's hand.

Justinian and the Pope discussed the issue of the Synod. The main speaker was Gregory, who was to be the next Pope, and who developed at length the views of the Western Church. Finally, it was agreed that some of the synodical articles be accepted by the Church of Rome. Rome did not have to accept those to which she was opposed. However, no written agreement was drawn up.[547] It is not known whether the negotiations took place before the high mass where Justinian confirmed the prerogatives of Rome.

The Pope embarked and the ships left via Sicily and Gaeta to arrive in Rome on the 24th of October 711.[548]

Thus ended the dispute between Constantinople and Rome which had lasted for so many years.

3

The events which took place in Italy after the Pope's departure for Constantinople have not been examined with any care. For this reason, great differences of view are to be noted between our modern historians.

As written above, the Pope met with the new Exarch of Italy, John surnamed Rizocopus, in Naples. It is not known when the

545. A palace in the 10th distict of Constantinople. It was built by Placidia, daughter of Theodosius the Great and was used for the needs of the Western Church.

546. *L.P.* I, 391. — Duchêsne, *op.cit.*, p.482. —Bertolini, *op.cit.*, p.416.

547. Laurent, *L'Oeuvre Canonique.*

548. *L.P.* I, 391. —Hodgkin, *op.cit.*, VI, 379. —Romano, *op.cit.*, p. 326.

latter was appointed Exarch,[549] neither what was discussed between him and the Pope. I believe it must have been shortly before that John was appointed Exarch and was hastily dispatched to Italy to restore order. In any case, as soon as the Pope left, the Exarch went to Rome where he arrested some of the old clergy and some papal officials, the deacon Silas, the treasurer of the Pope named Peter, the abbot Sergius and a few others whom he beheaded after a short trial.[550] The reasons for these executions are unknown. It is possible that these persons were opposed to the Pope or were suspected of conspiring against him.[551] Nevertheless, given the fact that the execution took place immediately after the Pope's meeting with the Exarch and that the Pope did not protest over them, it is only reasonable to assume that those executed were indeed his enemies and that their punishment was perhaps suggested by the Pope.

The Exarch, having accomplished his mission in Rome, set out for his seat at Ravenna with the purpose of suppressing the uprising of the people which occurred as soon as they heard of the executions in Rome. The cause for this insurrection is unknown and sources say nothing about it. In his feud with the Pope the Archbishop Felix had had the support of the nobles and of the people of Ravenna.[552] It is possible that they feared reprisals from the Exarch not only against those who had supported Felix, but also against those who had induced the army of Ravenna to march to Rome when the protospatharius Zacharias had been sent to Pope Sergius years ago.[553] I repeat, Ravenna had many a time come into opposition with

549. Unfortunately Diehl in *Exarchat*, though he writes that John succeeded Theophylactus, fails to mention a date. Grumel, *La Chronologie*, writes that Theophylactus remained as Exarch until 705. In contrast, Mann, *op.cit.*, mentions that Rizocopus was appointed in 710. Hartmann, *Untersuchungen*, p.21, states that John, the so-called Rizocopus, was appointed Exarch in 709. Cohn, *Die Stellung*, p.107, writes that Rizocopus was Exarch from 700 to 710.

550. Hodgkin, *op.cit.*, p.371. —Hartmann, *Geschichte*, II, pp.77-8. —Bertolini, *op.cit.*, p.415. —Guillou, *Regionalisme et Independence*, p.215.

551. Bertolini, *op.cit.*

552. Hodgkin, *op.cit.*, VI, 371 ff.

553. See Chapter IV, sec. 4.

Constantinople. No sooner had the Exarch arrived in Ravenna than he was killed by the conspirators.[554]

When Justinian was informed of this, he decided to give a harsh lesson to the people of Ravenna and therefore ordered the patrician and general of Sicily, Theodoros, to go there with an army, punish the ringleaders and restore order.

The Ravenna affair has assumed mythical proportions thanks to the imagination of a local chronicler[555] whose narrative has been judged as pompous and ridiculous.[556]

According to this chronicle Justinian wished to revenge himself upon the citizens of Ravenna because in 695, during Leontius' revolution, certain notables of Ravenna had played some part in his nose-mutilation! Moreover, when the protospatharius Zacharias arrived in Rome, the army of Ravenna revolted and went to Rome to prevent the arrest of the Pope! The patrician Theodore, general of Sicily, whom the chronicle mentions as "monostrategus" (supreme general),[557] was ordered to gather an army and sail to Ravenna. There, he was received(?) by the inhabitants. Theodore disembarked, encamped and invited all the notables to a meal. However, the guests were allowed to enter the tent only two at a time. As soon as they entered, they were gagged and transported to the ships. Thus all the notables and archbishop Felix were arrested. Afterwards, the army entered the city, looted the houses of the wealthy and burnt them. Theodore seized their estates. They were all carried to Constantinople where they were put to death. Felix was blinded and exiled to Crimea.

I have tried to give a brief account of the narrative as it

554. *L.P.* I, 390. —Bertolini, p.415. —Guillou, p.215. Head in her study *The Second Reign* writes that it is possible he was not killed by the citizens of Ravenna but died from a serious illness. I do not think this is right. Hartmann, though, in his *Geschichte* writes that these events took place in 709, in *Untersuchungen* maintains that John was killed in 710.

555. Agnelli, *Liber.* Eccl. Rav.

556. Duchêsne in *L.P.* I, note 3, p.303.

557. I do not know why he calls him thus. Probably, in the absence of an Exarch, the army of the Exarchate of Italy was under the orders of Theodoros, who was general of the theme of Sicily.

appears in the above mentioned chronicle[558] which, in my opinion, contains many imaginary details. What is curious is that although the Byzantine chroniclers disliked Justinian they say nothing of this affair. What is even more curious is that almost all modern historians[559] accept this narrative which they also consider as true.

I believe for a variety of reasons that this chronicle gives us a distorted picture of what happened in Ravenna. Irrespective of the fact that the Byzantine chroniclers mention nothing about it, even the *Liber Pontificalis*, which is supposed to be more contemporary with the events than the Chronicle of Agnelli (9th or 10th century), states that by order of Justinian "the arrogant archbishop and all the conspirators of Ravenna..." were arrested and that this was a *just divine punishment* for the reaction that the Church of Ravenna showed against the Apostolic See.[560] This paragraph suffices to show that the chronicler of Ravenna is not reporting true facts. Besides all this I would like to observe the following: Both the *Liber Pontificalis* and Agnelli mention the arrests at Ravenna as having taken place before the murder of the Exarch John. However, this is in contradiction with what follows in the narrative of the *Liber Pontificalis*. Hence, it is justified to ask for a transposition of the events[561] for their course was inevitable. The Church of Ravenna always desired to be independent of the Church of Rome.[562] Moreover this would have been consistent with the 17th Canon of the Chalchedon Synod. The archbishop Mavros had achieved this independence through the Emperor Constantine III (Constans) in 666.[563] This privilege had been abolished by Constantine IV after an

558. Agnelli, *op.cit.*, pp.368-9.

559. Ostrogorsky, *History*, p.143. —Bréhier, *Vie et Mort de Byzance*, p.70. —Kulakovsky, *op.cit.*, III, 294. —Lebeau, *Histoire*, XII, 38-9. —Romano, *op.cit.*, p.326. —Hodgkin, *op.cit.*, p.371 ff. —Hartmann, *Geschichte*, II, 77-8. —Diehl, p.274.

560. *L.P.* I, 389.

561. Duchêsne, in *L.P.* I, 393 and note 3. —Gllou, *op.cit.*, p.217.

562. See Stratos, Vol. III, p.252 ff.

563. Agnelli, *op.cit.*, p.350 ff. —Dölger, *Regesten*, No. 232. —Hartmann, p.250. —Diehl, *Exarchat*, p.271 ff.

agreement of Pope Leo II with the archbishop of Ravenna, Theodore.[564] The archbishop Felix, however, refused to sign the document of allegiance to the Pope. The notables of Ravenna supported him. The Pope met with the Exarch and after their meeting, while the Pope was travelling to Constantinople at the Emperor's invitation, the Exarch went to Rome, proceeded with the executions and then arrived at Ravenna. The citizens, who had many a time revolted against the Emperor, naturally feared that the new Exarch would impose severe punishments for he had given proof of his severity in Rome. They were already involved in an uprising which took the form of a revolt because they probably thought that by killing the Exarch they would avoid the danger of an immediate cruel punishment.

Justinian could not allow this revolt, or the refusal of allegiance to the Pope, or even more so the murder of the Exarch to go unpunished. As he had no time to spare in order to send immediately another Exarch (later a cubicularius named Scholasticos assumed the post, but he arrived there in 713[565]) or an army, he ordered the general of Sicily to gather his army and go to Ravenna to restore order. It is for this reason that he was called "monostrategus" because he was at the head of both the army of the theme of Sicily and of the Exarchate of Ravenna.

What is curious is that Pope Constantine was in Byzantium when the archbishop Felix and some of the notables (not all as Agnelli states) were transported. He did not protest neither did he try to prevent the blinding and exile of Felix nor did he make any attempt to save the notables from death. He did not seem annoyed; on the contrary he considered these actions as a just punishment for the attitude of the Ravennites and for their refusal to pay allegiance.

These are the reasons which prevent me from accepting as true the account given by Agnelli which our historians accept

564. *L.P.* I, 359. —Jaffe-Wattenbach, No. 2123. —Amandos, I, 333. —Bertolini, p.392.

565. Paul the Deacon, VI, 34. —Hartmann, *Untersuchungen*, p.21. —Diehl, *Exarchat*, p.173. —Grumel in *La Chronologie*, p.417 maintains that at first a man named Eutychius was sent as Exarch and then Scholasticus. —See Cohn, *op.cit.*, pp.107-8.

with such ease. The Ravenna affair needs to be carefully examined in the light of the above. The conclusions at which one may arrive should be logically consistent with the course of the events. In my opinion the executions in Rome and the murder of Exarch John at Ravenna happened in 710. The suppression of the insurrection at Ravenna, the arrest of the archbiship Felix and of a number of notables occurred in the first six months of 711.

CHAPTER XII

MILITARY OPERATIONS AGAINST THE ENEMIES OF BYZANTIUM

Justinian's policy when he resumed the throne was to maintain peace with the states and nations bordering Byzantium and in general within the Byzantine possessions.

A few months after the conquest of Constantinople the Caliph Abd al-Malik, tenth Caliph of the Muslims and fifth of the Ummayad family, died of the 15th of the month Shawal of the 86th year of the Hegira = Friday, 9th October 705.[566] He reigned slightly over 21 years. Many sources present him as an avaricious man, brutal and blood-thirsty.[567] He was succeeded on the same day by his son Al-Walid who reigned for approximately nine and a half years. He was then 33-36 years old (opinion on his age differs).

With the ruler of Bulgaria, Tervel, Justinian had friendly relations, as I wrote in a previous chapter. His relations with the Lombards were also peaceful as well as with the princes of Croatia and Serbia who, though subject to him, nevertheless conducted their affairs independently and never seemed to bother the Byzantines.

This was the state of the Empire when Justinian II assumed the throne for a second time.

1

Abd al-Malik desired to extend the mosque of Omar in Damascus. The mosque was small and stood near the big

566. Zambaur, *Manuel*, p.3, however, he writes the 14th of Sabal. —Theophanes, p.374 the year 6197=705-6. See the chronologies of the sources in Caetani, p.1035 ff.

567. Al-Makin, p.27. —Maçoudi, V. 360. —Tabari, etc.

Christian Church of St. John. The extension could not materialised unless the Church of St. John was demolished to create the required space. The Christians reacted to this. They maintained that when Khaled ibn Walid entered Damascus one of the terms of surrender was that the great church was to be divided between the Moslems and the Christians. This of course comes from tradition.[568] It is to be noted that originally the church was an ancient temple which was transformed into a Christian church. The Christians decorated it and with time it became an imposing edifice. Al-Malik offered to buy the church but negotiations failed. Al Walid was not greatly educated but he was terribly devout and had a particular liking for churches. Among the Ummayads he is considered as the Caliph who contributed most to the construction and decoration of Muslim edifices. Thus, he was ready to do anything provided he achieved his purpose and declared the church alienable[569] giving to the Christians other land in exchange. The date on which the building started is uncertain, however it appears that it began in the 2nd year of his reign, i.e., the 87th of the Hegira = 706-7.[570] Al-Walid asked Justinian to sent him builders and mosaics so as to decorate this new majestic mosque of Omar. Indeed, Justinian answered his request and sent workers and mosaics.[571] Moreover, al-Walid brought artists and materials from Egypt. The mosque was built between the years 706-712 and it is said to have cost about 5,600,000 dinars.

Al-Walid decided to remodel the mosque of the Prophet in Medina and to this purpose ordered the new governor of Medina

568. Neither Baladhuri nor Tabari mention this tradition. It is possible that this custom was imposed some years after the conquest. See Lammens, *Le Calife Walid.* He writes that Wakidi in Tabari (De Goeje ed.) says that he saw the treaty and that such terms are not mentioned therein.

569. Theophanes, p.375 "he seized it because he was jealous of its surpassing beauty".

570. *Chronicon of the year 1234.* — Eliae Nisibeni, p.75. — Suyuti, p.229. —Maçoudi, V, 361-3. —Al-Makine, p.76. —Yakubi, II, 339. —Michael the Syrian, II, 481.

571. Maqdisi, in *B.G.A.* III, 158. —Gibb, *Arab-Byzantine* —Vasiliev, *Byzantium and Islam*, p.315. —Huart, *Histoire des Arabes*, II, 266.—Marçais, *Le Monde Oriental*, p.339.

Umayr ben al-Aziz (probably his cousin) to get ready for expanding and redecorating the old mosque.[572] Again he requested Justinian's help who, it is said, sent him 100,000 gold coins, 100 workers and 40 loads of mosaic. It has been maintained that it was not Byzantine craftsmen who participated in this undertaking but Syrians and Egyptian Christians.[573] This cannot be accepted in view of the fact that it contradicts the chronicle of Ibn Zabala, written in 814, which mentions that the Emperor sent loads of mosaic, 24 specialised craftsmen and 80,000 dinars.[574]

It has been said that al-Walid, in order to thank Justinian for the help given, sent to him from Egypt a large quantity of pepper of the value of approximately 20,000 dinars.[575]

I wish to remind the reader that within the same year of his restoration Justinian freed 6,000 Arab captives who were held in Byzantine territory.[576]

From what has been said I believe it is clear that Justinian tried not only to avoid a disruption of relations with the Arabs, but on the contrary to cultivate friendly and peaceful conditions.

2

The question at issue is when did hostilities begin between the Byzantines and the Arabs and also what were the causes that led to war.

What intervened to disrupt the friendly and peaceful relations between the two Empires is completely obscure. We are by now far removed from that period during which the Arabs raided Byzantine territories twice a year in order to loot or to give a chance to their army to keep in fighting form. As I have already written[577] these yearly attacks had proved exhausting,

572. Tabari, II, 1192-94. —Ibn Al-Athir, IV, 421-2. —Baladhuri (De Goeje ed.), pp.6-7. —Yakubi, II, 339-340.

573. Sauvaget, *La Mosquée Ommeyade de Medine*, pp.111 ff.

574. For this matter see Gibb, *Arab-Byzantine Relations*. —Caetani, p.1066.

575. Al-Hakam (Torrey ed.) pp.98-9.

576. See Chapter X, sec.3.

577. Stratos, *op.cit.*, Vol. IV, p.51-52

did not bring in much booty and their losses were greater than their gains.

If one is to trust the Arab chroniclers, Arab incursions against Byzantine territory began immediately after Al-Walid assumed the Caliphate. It is mentioned that in the 86th year Maslamah invaded Romania and the same is said for the year 87 = 706 and 88 = 707.[578] Other information given by a serious Arab chronicler[579] states that Junadah ibn Abi Umaiyah invaded Crete during the reign of Al-Walid and conquered part of it. However, Junadah died in the 80th year of the Hegira = 700, in other words five years before al-Walid came to power, hence this information too is not correct.

All these chronologies strike me as being erroneous. The Byzantines mention nothing about such incursions. In 706 (87th of the Hegira) Walid began the reconstruction of the Mosque of Damascus and requested help from Byzantium. Would Justinian have answered this request if the Arabs had invaded his teritory?

The Byzantines mention the year 6201[580] as the first year in which invasions occurred. Yet Theophanes provides us with another curious information namely that the Muslims invaded Tyana "to revenge the slaughter of the army and the death of Maiuma caused by Marianus". It appears that a certain Maiuma had invaded the region of Cilicia with his army and was there defeated and killed by a certain Marianus. The following information about Maiuma comes to us from an Arab source.[581] He was the slave of Muawiyah's sister. He had escaped and

578. Tabari, II, 1181-5 relying on Wakidi and Yakubi, II, 338-9 for the year 86th = 705. Theophanes (p.372) dates this expedition in 6196 = 704-5 and writes that the Arabs were defeated by the general Heraclius. For the year 88, Tabari, II, 1191, Al-Athir, IV, 421, etc.

579. Baladhuri, (Hitti ed.) p.376.

580. Theophanes, p.377, 4th of Justinian = 708-9. —Eliae Nisibeni (p.76), writes the Greek year 1019 = 708-9 and 89th of the Arabs/708. —*The Chronicon 1234*, p.332 gives the same date.

581. Baladhuri, *op.cit.*, pp.248-9. —Paparrigopoulos, *History*, p.269. —Brooks, *The Arabs in Asia Minor*, p.191. —The narrative is so confused that one cannot be sure of the date. It is noteworthy that on one page it refers to Al-Malik as the Caliph and on the next to Al-Walid.

found refuge together with other Mardaites[582] in the mountains of Lebanon. Maslamah ibn al-Malik, brother of the Caliph, who finally dispersed all the remaining Mardaites, felt such respect for his valour that he requested his liberation and placed him at the head of an army in the region of Antioch. He invaded Byzantine territory[583] and in a battle near Tyana was killed. Maslamah swore to revenge his death. This incursion probably occurred in the 87th year of the Hegira =706.

In the 88th or rather the 89th year of the Arabs =708 Maslamah ibn Malik and Aba ibn Walid, the Caliph's son, invaded Byzantine territory and reached Tyana.[584] Concerning the date, I shall return to it below because opinions are divided over it. Theophanes writes that the invasion took place in order to revenge the murder of Maiumas (Maiuma) but the city of Tyana was well fortified and it was not easy to conquer. The two Arab generals began to pillage the area and then lay siege to the city.

The city's defense was successful. Though the Arabs managed to take part of the wall, which they had half-destroyed with their siege engines, they were unable to conquer the town. After a long struggle and numerous battles they began to entertain the idea of abandoning the project.[585] They had spent a whole winter fighting and keeping siege to no effect.

Upon hearing that Tyana was besieged, Justinian decided to send an army to liberate the city. Byzantine sources state that the army was headed by Theodore Karteroukas and Theophylactus Salivas. I presume the latter was a friend of Justinian's whom he had taken with him from Cherson[586] after his escape from Phanagoria of Crimea. How he came to be a general is unknown. There is another strange passage stating that together with the

582. For the Mardaites see Stratos, *op.cit.*, Vol. IV. p.39 ff, where the relevant bibliography.

583. Yakut, III, 554.

584. Ancient well-fortified town in south Cappadocia. It guarded the passes of Taurus and was the support of many forts in Cilicia. See Ramsay, *op. cit.*, pp.348 and 449.

585. Nicephorus, *History*, p.43.

586. See Chapter IX, sec. 2.

army he dispatched "a number of agriculturers" or as another source states "a large crowd of peasants and agriculturers".[587] I must confess that I do not understand precisely what the chroniclers mean by this sentence, especially Nicephorus who writes that the peasant people were unarmed and for this reason were butchered by the Arabs. The explanation which has been given that these were small landowners does not seem satisfactory.[588] Moreover, I do not understand what this "unarmed crowd" was going to fight for? Before the city of Tyana a great battle took place. Originally the Byzantines were winning and the Arabs retreated. Aba ibn Walid managed to stop the retreat. The "peasants" attacked in a disorderly manner and it is said (Theophanes) that the two generals had a row and the battle went haywire. The Arabs took advantage of this and routed the Byzantines. It has been maintained that 40,000(!) men were killed and many others captured.[589] The Arabs took the provisions which the Byzantines carried with them as well as the "Touldon"[590] of the Byzantine army.

Victory gave the Arabs renewed courage and they continued the siege. The besieged, who had lost all hope of outside help, when their provisions came to an end decided to start negotiations with the Arabs. The latter promised not to harm the inhabitants if they surrendered the city. It has been said[591] that the Arabs did not keep their word for they enslaved many of the

587. Theophanes, p.377. —Nicephorus, p.44.

588. Kaegi, *Some Reconsiderations*, pp.42-3.

589. Theophanes, p.377. —Nicephorus, p.44. —Michael the Syrian, II, 418. —Agapius, pp.239/499. —*Chronicon 1234*, p.332. —Tabari, II, 1191-1192. —Suyuti, p.229. —Al-Athir, IV, 121. —Beathgen, *Fragmente*, 121. —Wellhausen, *op.cit.*, p.436. —Cheira, *La Lutte*, p.173 ff. —Caetani, *Chronographia*, p.1065. —Honigmann, *Die Ostgrenze*, p.42.

590. Transportation service of the Byzantine army. It appears that in the Touldon besides the army equipment, travelled the legal and illegal wives of the soldiers as well as their children, etc. A person in this corps was called Guard of the Touldon (Touldophylax). The Touldon had its own banner. See Dain, A., "Touldos et Touldon", in *Annuaire de l'Institut de Philologie Orientale*, 10/1950, Brussels.

591. Theophanes, p.377. —It should be noted that no other chronicler gives this version

citizens and others they exiled to the desert. I am dubious of this version because the Arabs usually kept their agreements. What is more, at the head of this army was the brother of the Caliph and his son who could not violate their promise.

The Arabs looted the place, destroyed[592] and then abandoned it. I should now like to come back to the question of chronology. The affair at Tyana lasted for almost a year. It is therefore possible that the Arabs invaded Byzantine territory in the 88th year of the Hegira (12.12.706 to 1.12.707), that is, in the summer of 88. Theophanes writes the Year of Creation 6201. In terms of the Byzantine chronology 6201 began on 1.9.708 and ended on 31.8.709. Hence, the 89th of the Hegira coincided with the year 6201 for a period of three months. Theophanes, however, employs the Alexandrian chronology[593] where the year begins on the 21st of March. The 88th year and 6201 coincide in this instance for several months. Under these presuppositions those who maintain that the expedition to Tyana ended in 708[594] are right and so are those who argue for the year 709.[595]

The differences in the dating of the Arab and Byzantine chroniclers make it difficult to decide whether Aba ibn al-Walid and the Arabs marched in the same year to Chrysoupolis, as the Arabs maintain, or if this occurred in the following year as the Byzantine and Syrian chroniclers state. In any event, it is said that they arrived in Chrysoupolis, which is across from Constantinople, killing and pillaging. Theophanes dates this expedition in 6202=709-10, i.e. the year following the fall of

592. Tyana was soon recaptured by the Byzantines who built the town again.

593. Grumel, *La Chronologie.*

594. Agapius, pp.238/498. —*Chronicon of the Year 1234*, p.332. —Tabari, II, 1191-2 and most Arab Chroniclers. —Suyuti, p.229. —Brooks in *C.M.H.* —Cheira, *op.cit.*, p.173. —Hitti, *History of the Arabs*, p.212. —Müller, *Der Islam*, II, 415. —Honigmann, *op.cit.*, p.42 and others.

595. The Byzantine chroniclers. —Ostrogorsky, *op.cit.*, p.143. —Diehl, *Le Monde Oriental*, p.246. —Bury, *History*, II, 362 ff. —Brooks, *The Arabs.* —Wellhausen, *op.cit.* —Tabari, II, 1197 has both dates. See also Caetani, *op.cit.*, pp.1064-5.

Tyana and mentions only Aba as army leader, while the other chroniclers give different dates.[596]

The Arabs continued their raids up to the end of Justinian's reign, but it is impossible to date them precisely because of the inconsistencies encountered in the sources. Some write that Maslamah invaded Cilicia and occupied three fortresses,[597] others that the invasion was conducted by Uthman ibn Hayan who conquered many forts among which was "Kamaha".[598] Other chroniclers state that Maslamah replaced Mohammed ibn Marwan as governor of Armenia and claim that he conquered many strongholds, amongst them Darende,[599] the mountainous stronghold of Cappadocia on the route between Melitene and Sebasteia, where the Arabs installed a garrison. They also mention an invasion by Aba of Isauria in the year 709.[600] I repeat that the sources provide such a confused picture that even two great historians,[601] who studied with great care these invasions, have been unable to come to any definite chronological conclusions.

Before ending this section which concerns the military operations of the Arabs and the Byzantines in the south, I would like to mention a rather peculiar one which is narrated by the Arab chroniclers. It is said that the Byzantine fleet in retribution for the Arab invasions sailed to Egypt and occupied Damietta.[602]

596. Agapius, 2nd Walid = 707. —Eliae Nisibeni, 92nd of Arabs = 710 and 1022 = 710-711 of the Greeks. —Baethgen, relying on Khuwarazmi, same date for the invasion of Aba.

597. Tabari, II, 1194. —Al-Athir, IV, 422 for the year 707.

598. Theophanes, p.377 for the year 6203 = 710-711. —Agapius, pp.239/499. —Baethgen, relying on Khuwarazmi, for the 91st year = 710. —Eliae Nisibeni, p.76. —Honigmann, p.56.

599. Michael the Syrian, II, 479. —*Chronicon of the year 846*, p.582 for the year 1021 = 710. —According to Baladhuri, Tarandon was conquered in the 83rd of Hegira = 703. See also Yakut, III, 534 as well as above notes 391 and 392.

600. Theophanes, p.377, for the year 6202 = 710-711. —Tabari, II, 1200.

601. Brooks, *The Arabs in Asia Minor*. —Wellhausen, *Die Kämpfe der Araber mit der Romäern*.

602. Tabari, II, 1201. —Al-Athir, IV, 433. —Baethgen, relying on the *Chronicle* of the Arabs for the year 90 = 709 or 1020 = 708-709. —Brooks, in *C.M.H.*—Makrizi, Casanova ed. —Cheira, *op.cit.*, p.199.

There, the admiral Khaled ibn Kaizan was arrested. It is not made clear whether he was arrested during a sea battle with the Egyptian fleet. However, on Justinian's orders the Egyptian admiral was delivered to al-Walid (as an exchange?).

3

In Chapter VIII I discussed the events which occurred in Armenia. Unfortunately, great confusion is to be found here too so that we are not able to arrive at any conclusions about the chronology or even about the events as such. The Armenian chroniclers[603] date the extermination of the Armenian nobles in the reign of Walid and more especially in his first year 705-6. In contrast, the Byzantines[604] date it in the reign of al-Malik in 702-3. The Syrian chroniclers[605] more or less agree with the Byzantines.

After the settlement of Smbad Bagratuni at Phasis of Colchis and the subjugation of the surviving nobles of Armenia, peace seems to have spread over this area. Mohammed ibn al-Marwan remained for a few more years as governor of the entire region. According to the sources, in 709-10 al-Walid replaced his uncle Mohammed with his own brother Maslamah ibn al-Malik, who remained governor till the 104th year of the Hegira = 722-23, when he was in turn replaced by Djarrah ibn Abdallah al-Hakami.[606] However, some sources state that it was Abd al-Aziz ibn al-Walid who replaced Mohammed as governor of Armenia.[607]

603. Ardzrouni, p.93. —Stephanos von Taron, ed. Gelzer, p.91. —Jean Catholicos, p.86. —Vardan, p.98. —Ghevond, p.34. —Leonce, ed. Filler, p.31 ff.

604. Theophanes, p.372, for the year 6195 = 702-3. —Zonaras, III, 325-26.

605. Michael the Syrian, II, 474. The same chronology is accepted by the Arabs Baladhuri, Yakut, Ibn al-Athir, etc.

606. *E.I.* n. ed. Vol. II, p.494. —Zambaur, *Manuel*, p.178. —Caetani, *op.cit.*, p.1109, who gives as the date of Djarrah's appointment the year 102 = 720-721.

607. Filler, *Questiones de Leontii*, p.34. —Ghazarian, *Armenien*, p.45. —Ter Ghevondian, *Le Prince*.

Walid was becoming worried over the fact that some form of alliance was being effected between the Byzantines and the Khazars with the common aim of attacking the Arabs.[608] For this reason he entrusted his son Abd al-Aziz to negotiate with Smbad. The latter had disrupted relations with the Byzantines for reasons unknown. Smbad managed to get from the Arabs guaranties assuring the privileges and possessions not only of his person but of all the exiled Armenian nobles and set out for Armenia. Then he proceeded to do an ungodly act: he lay bare the city Phasis by looting, by destroying all the churches and stealing their treasures. The Greeks were wroth and pronounced official anathema on him.[609] All agree that these events took place six years after Smbad had settled in Phasis, hence in 711 which was the last year of Justinian's reign, or in 712, first year of Philippicos.

4

As I wrote in Chapter VII, section 2, in 697-8 after the incursion of Walid ben Malik[610] into Asia Minor and the revolution which took place in Constantinople against Justinian, Sergius, the patrician of Lazike, revolted and acceded to the Arabs.[611] The whole of Lazike with the exception of the city Poti (Phasis) and the area around had acceded as well as Abasgia,[612] Iberia[613] and "Apsilia".[614] Justinian wished to bring these dominions within the Byzantine sphere of influence again. In the meantime, several courtiers who resented the power and

608. Toumanoff, in *C.M.H.* new ed. IV, 607.

609. Stephanos von Taron, p.92. —Vardan, pp.98-9. —Ghevond, pp.36-7. —Laurent, *L'Armenie* p.205.

610. Alidos according to Theophanes, p.370.

611. Theophanes, p.370. —Cedrenus, p.776.

612. The country extended north of the Caucasus and the river Ingur which formed the border with Lazika. It is to be noted that Lazika was a very mountainous region on the east side of the Black Sea. Today West Georgia (see Stratos, Vol. I, p.198 ff.).

613. Iberia, today Georgia of Caucasus.

614. Apsilia, between Lazika and Abasgia north of the course of the river Condor.

influence which Leo had acquired over the king began to slander and defame him.[615] At first Justinian payed no attention to these slanders and entrusted Leo with the mission of regaining the lost areas from the Arabs. He gave him money and sent him to the Alans[616] in the hope that with their help Leo would regain control in Abasgia and Lazike.

In the course of this expedition Leo showed his military genius. He left the money to people in his confidence at Phasis, traversed Caucasus and arrived at Alania. There he won the confidence of the people and with their assistance invaded Abasgia but as it appears was unsuccessful in conquering it. Justinian, in the meantime, had sent to Phasis to get back the money Leo had left there and so Leo was left exposed to the Alans. Shortly after, Leo was informed that a Byzantine army was besieging Archaeopolis,[617] which had willingly acceded to the Arabs. Though his forces were modest Leo hastened to the spot. However, the Arab army had already arrived and had defeated the Byzantines. Leo managed to save part of the Byzantine force and proceeded to the sea in order to return to Byzantium.

By fraud Leo succeeded in occupying the stronghold Sideron, which was an obstacle on his way, and destroyed it completely. When he reached the sea the Apsilians helped him and his army to embark on ships and by way of Trebizond return to Constantinople.

When he arrived in Constantinople Justinian had already been killed and Philippicos, who had succeeded him, dethroned. Hence, he must have arrived in 713. The Emperor Artemios

615. Theophanes, p.391.

616. Nomadic Sarmatian tribe in north Caucasus and south of the regions of the Khazars with whom they did not have friendly relations. (Con. Porphyrogennetus, *De. Adm. Imp.* Chapters X and XI). They received financial assistance from the Byzantines because they were good warriors and prevented the Khazars from attacking Crimea.

617. Well-fortified town of Lazika north of Poti and on the tributary of Phasis (Procopius, *Belli Goth.* I, 4). The Roman army had to retreat there before the superior Arab forces. Brooks, in *C.M.H.*, II, 412.

(Anastasios) gave him the title of general and appointed him governor (patrician and general) of the Anatolikon theme.[618]

5

In Chapters VII and VIII events which occurred in Africa were discussed. As mentioned, after the conquest of Carthage in 698 by the Arabs, no attempt was made on the part of the Byzantines to reconquer this old and once prosperous large province. Only Septem (Ceuta), a few towns and villages of second Mauritania and the islands of Majorca and Minorca,[619] where many Carthagenians had found refuge,[620] remained under Byzantine rule. It has been maintained that the governor of Septem, Count Julianus, was given the title of Exarch and all the regions mentioned came under his authority.[621]

Al-Walid appointed Muza ben Nuzayr governor of Ifrykia (Africa) in the 89th year of the Hegira=708.[622]

Muza began systematically to subject and to convert the various Berber and Mauritanian tribes of western North Africa. It has been said that once he subdued the indigenous tribes and the scant Byzantine garrisons, he attacked Septem. However, the resistance put up by the Byzantine garrison was violent and he was finally forced to withdraw.[623] It has also been said[624] that

618. Theophanes, p.395. —Zonaras, III, 335. For a detailed story of Leo's campaign to Alania see Canard, "L'Aventure Caucasiènne du Spathaire Leon" in *Etudes Armeniennes*, Vol. 8/1971. —Kulakovsky, *op.cit.*, Vol. III. —Lebeau, *Histoire*, XII, 93-97 and especially the notes therein of Saint-Martin.

619. Diehl, *Histoire de la Domination Byzantine en Afrique*, p.587.

620. Ibn Khaldoun, *Histoire des Berbères*, p.213.—Wellhausen, *Die Kämpfe*, p.435. —Diehl, *op.cit.*, p.583.

621. Diehl, p.587 ff. No source confirms this information.

622. Ubayd Allah, p.42. —Baladhuri, ed. Hitti, p.362. —Abd al-Hakam. —Ibn Adhari, ed. Fagnan, pp.34-35. —Al-Athir, IV, 428. —The chroniclers give different dates for the appointment of Muza. See Caetani, *Chronographia*, pp.1077-78 where all the relevant bibliography.

623. Diehl, *op.cit.*, p.588.

624. Ibn Adhari, p.33. —Al-Athir, IV, 427. —Amari, *Storia*, I, 124, but for the year 704.

he sent his son to pillage Majorca and part of Sicily.

After his failure at Septem, Muza continued his military operations in northwestern Africa and on the 90th year of the Hegira = 709 he occupied Tangiers[625] and converted its inhabitants. He appointed as governor Tarik ben Ziyad who in a few years' time was the first to invade Spain.

After these achievements Muza returned to Kairouan for the Province of Africa had virtually all been conquered. Indeed, with the exception of Septem the whole of Afrcia had been subjugated and the people were gradually being converted to Islam. Muza founded a powerful naval base in Tunis with the purpose of constructing a fleet for the invasion and conquest of Sicily. This plan was delayed, however, because of the campaign in Spain and the conditions of its conquest.

Africa was lost to the Byzantines because Constantine IV abandoned the strategic policy of Constantine III (Constans) which was to keep a strong fleet in Sicily for immediate action in the event of an Arab attack on the western Mediterranean.[626] Constantine's disposition which was not warlike and his fear concerning the security of Constantinople caused him to keep the entire Byzantine fleet in the east Mediterranean. This strategy proved disastrous for the western provinces of Byzantium.

6

In the Balkan Peninsula the situation was more or less peaceful. Although a chronicler[627] states that the Slavs, with whom Leontius did not concern himself, pillaged Romania and were attacked and defeated by Apsimarus-Tiberius, I tend to think that this information is not valid as no other source confirms it. It is possible that these events date from the period

625. Abd al-Hakam. —Ibn Adhari, pp.36-7. —Al-Athir, IV, 427-28. —Ubayd Allah, p.42. —Baladhuri, ed. Hitti, p.362.

626. Bury, *The Naval Policy of the Roman Empire*, p.25.

627. Michael the Syrian, II, 473 ff.

of Constantine IV when the Slavs did engage in pillaging and a campaign was undertaken against them.[628]

The Byzantine chroniclers[629] mention an incident which is totally illogical and cannot possibly have occurred. It is said that in the year 6200=708, 3rd year of Justinian and hence 707-8, Justinian dissolved the peace treaty with the Bulgars, sent cavalry divisions to Thrace, equiped a navy and marched against Tervel and the Bulgars. He conquered Aghialos(?),[630] ordered his navy to anchor before the fort and his cavalry to camp on the upper valleys. When the Bulgars realised that the Byzantines had wandered into the valleys they fell upon them, and killed and captured a great number. Justinian escaped to the "castle" and when he realised that the Bulgars had stood for three days outside the "castle" he cut the tendons of his horse and ordered that the same be done with all horses so they would not be of use to the Bulgars. That night, he set sail "in secret" and returned to Constantinople "dishonoured". This is the curious account given by the Byzantine chroniclers which many of our contemporary historians accept unexamined.

Aghialos was an especially well fortified Byzantine town. Even if we accept the information that Justinian ceded Zagoria to Tervel as a reward for the assistance given him as true,[631] we know that Aghialos remained Byzantine.[632] Consequently, all one could say is that it lay close to the border. How could such a massive army of Bulgars "surprise" the Byzantines? Why did Justinian cut the tendons of his horse? Since the area was Byzantine they could very well have rode away while in battle.

628. Stratos, op.cit., Vol. IV, Chapter IV.

629. Theophanes, p.376. —Nicephorus, p.43. —Zonaras, III, 328. —Leo the Grammarian, p.169. —Cedrenus, pp.781-2. —Historia Miscellae. I, 143.

630. City and port of East Romylia on the Black Sea. It was very well fortified. The walls had been mended in the reign of Justinian I. It was rebuilt in 746 after the earthquake of 740 by the queen Irene. The fortifications were so strong that in spite of repeated attacks by the Avars, it was only conquered in 811 by the Bulgars who possessed it for a period of three years. See Bury, *History of the Eastern Roman Empire*, p.347. —Ostrogorsky, *op.cit.* Anchialos belonged to the theme of Thrace, as C. Porphyrogennetus writes.

631. See Chapter X, sec. 2.

632. Runciman, *op.cit.*, p.31. —Kulakovsky, *op.cit.*, III.

Isn't this the reason which brought Justinian to the city after all? How is it possible that the friendly relations of Justinian and Tervel changed within two years and that in spite of this the latter continued to be called "Caesar". And if indeed their relations became hostile how come Justinian asked for assistance from his enemy and got it? For in 711, when revolution broke out in Cherson at Crimea and Bardanis was proclaimed Emperor, Justinian asked Tervel's assistance who responded by sending 3,000 men for this purpose.[633] Finally, if their relations had been disrupted, why did Tervel invade Thrace in 712 to revenge Justinian's murder?[634] These reasons lead me to doubt this account concerning a rather irrelevant and curious expedition undertaken by Justinian at the end of his reign and which many historians seem to accept without any difficulty.[635]

633. Nicephorus, p.47.

634. Nicephorus, p.48. —Theophanes, p.382. —Mansi, XI, 193 ff. —Kulakovsky, *op.cit.*

635. Ostrogorsky, *op.cit.*, p.143, note 1. —Kulakovsky, *op.cit.*, who maintains that Theophanes' account may refer to irregular bands of Bulgars and that Justinian never dissolved the peace treaty with Tervel. However, both Theophanes and Nicephorus copy from a source contemporary with the events. My opinion is that a scribe must have confused two different texts and inserted this campaign in this period.

CHAPTER XIII

THE CHERSON AFFAIR

The way in which Byzantine chroniclers narrate this affair is so curious that it makes one wonder whether it can be accepted. Surely from all these stories some truth can be extracted, especially if one takes into account its consequences and the fact that from that time a period of turbulence and anarchy set in which affected Byzantium for almost six years.

I shall transcribe the story as Theophanes narrates it, pointing out the differences which exist in the narratives of the other chroniclers. I shall then make some observations and try to come to some reasonable conclusions.

Theophanes writes:[636]

Justinian, remembering the insult and slander directed against his person by the Chersonites, the Bosporians and the inhabitants of other regions,[637] assembled all the ships: "every type of boat, dromons, triremes, cargo ships,[638] fishing boats, even helandions".[639] He also assembled an army to which he added "workmen and members of the demes", in other words, he included part of the militia (from the two demes of Constantinople) and this army (Nicephorus adds "who were about a hundred thousand") embarked under the leadership of Stephanos,[640] the patrician surnamed Asmiktos and the

636. Theophanes, p.377.

637. By "Bosphorians" he means the inhabitants of the town Bosphorus in the Crimea. However, the other sentence is incomprehensible because besides Cherson and Bosphorus the Byzantines had no other possessions in the Crimea.

638. I presume he means big transport ships.

639. Nicephorus, p.44 writes: "many and various ships he gathered".

640. It is nowhere mentioned whether the patrician Stephanos was the old general and Eparch of Constantinople. He had been exiled with Justinian, who collected him together with others when he left Phanagoria and passed by

patrician Mavros.[641] The spatharius Elias was to depart with them (Nicephorus: "his own body-guard") and "also Bardanis who was Armenian by descent in order to be abandoned there as an exile". I shall concern myself with Bardanis further on. They had an express order to kill all the inhabitants of the castles and to spare no one. The spatharius Elias was to be appointed governor of Cherson.

Stephanos crossed the Black Sea and arrived at Cherson. He encountered no resistance and conquered the city. He killed all the inhabitants except the babes (Nicephorus "some infants") with the intention of turning them into slaves, "won over for slavery". He arrested the "Tudun",[642] ruler of Cherson and representative of the Khagan of the Khazars, Zoilus the Protopolitis[643] (first citizen) and 40 nobles of Cherson (Nicephorus: "the most renowned") together with their families, all of whom he sent as captives to the Emperor. Moreover, he arrested 27 notables of Cherson of whom seven "were burnt at the stake" and the other twenty placed in a boat which was then filled with stones and sunk. Surely, the order of events as narrated by Theophanes and the other chroniclers cannot be correct, for he must have first arrested the Tudun and the nobles and then "put every one to the sword". This, however, is another proof of the laxity with which the above chronicler writes.

Theophanes continues saying that when Justinian was informed of the salvation of the "infants" he was very angry. Nicephorus adds that Justinian judged Stephanos as being a very soft man since he had not followed the orders given and writes:

Cherson. Justinian afterwards sent him as ambassador to Tervel. See above Chapter IX, sections 2 and 3, as well as note 460.

641. Nicephorus mentions only Stephanos. In contrast, Zonaras, III, 328 and Sathas, *Synopsis*, p.118, mention both.

642. "Tudunus" is not a proper name and probably means "a provincial governor". As Vasiliev writes, *The Goths*, p.85 ff, it derives perhaps from the Chinese "tudunj". See Dunlop, *History...of the Khazars*. —Minns, *Scythians and Greeks*, p.533 ff.

643. For the administration in Cherson see Chapter IX. At the head was the "protopolitis" (first citizen) and there was a Senate of the notables. See C. Porphyrogennetus, *De Adm. Imp.*, Chapters 42 and 53.

"he found Stephanos more inclined to philanthropy than he thought". At all events, he commanded Stephanos to return immediately with the army and fleet. They departed in October but on their way encountered a great storm which almost caused the loss of the fleet off the shores of Paphlagonia.[644] According to the chroniclers 73,000 people were drowned![645] Nicephorus writes that many bodies were thrown upon the shores between the cities Amastris[646] and Heracleia.[647] According to Theophanes, when Justinian was informed of this tragedy he rejoiced and threatened to send a new fleet with orders to spare no one, to demolish the walls and level the cities to the ground.

The castellans, upon being informed of the impending threat, asked the Khagan of the Khazars for assistance and army in order to defend themselves (Nicephorus: "The nobles (one wonders which nobles since all had been killed) wished to save those who had survived the slaughter").[648] Theophanes goes on to say that the spatharius Elias, who had been appointed governor of the region, became furious and together with Bardanis, "the exile"(!) who was there already, started a revolution. Upon hearing of the revolt and the possible(?) intervention of the Khazars, Justinian dispatched a few dromons with the patrician and general logothete George "surnamed the Syrian", John the Eparch (I presume governor of Constantinople) and Christophorus, turmarch[649] of the theme of Thrace.

644. Large province of Asia Minor on the Black Sea and east of the province of Pontus.

645. Theophanes, p.378. —Nicephorus, p.45. —Cedrenus, p.782. —Zonaras, III, 328. —Sathas, *Synopsis*, p.118.

646. Amastris, city of Paphlagonia on the Black Sea, today Amasra.

647. Heracleia, city of Asia Minor on the Black Sea, west of Amastris, today Zogouldak.

648. Chroniclers disagree on this point. Nicephorus and Theophanes write that Justinian was threatening to send a new fleet; Sathas, *Synopsis*, p.118, and Glykas write that he is sending a new fleet under Bardanis, a person who, according to Theophanes and Nicephorus, had already been sent with the fleet of Stephanos.

649. Every theme was divided in two or three "tourmes". These were administrative districts, subdivisions of the greater area and nearly a division of the army. See Vol. I, p.276.

With them went 300 armed soldiers (I wonder what he means by this since unarmed soldiers would be useless) as well as the Tudun and Zoilus with orders that they be "reinstated" to power in Cherson (Nicephorus: "to their former posts"). Through an embassy they should try to communicate their apologies to the Khagan and, finally, arrest the spatharius Elias and Bardanis and bring them to Constantinople.

Theophanes continues his naïve narrative by saying that the people of Cherson (previously he wrote that all except the infants had been killed) refused to admit them into their city. On the second day after their arrival the Chersonites opened a gate and allowed only the general logothete and the Eparch to enter (Nicephorus: "George and the nobles who were with him"). These two were instantly put to death. The 300 soldiers, the turmarch, the Tudun and Zoilus were handed over to the Khazar guards with the command that they be taken to the Khagan. However, on the way the Tudun died and the Khazars killed the turmarch and the 300 soldiers.[650] The nobles of Cherson and other castellans(?) decided then to disavow Justinian and proclaim Bardanis, "who was there as an exile", as Emperor. When Justinian was informed of this mutiny and the alliance of the local Byzantines with the Khazars he was furious. He killed all the children of the spatharius Elias in their mother's presence and gave her to one of her slaves, an Indian cook.[651] He instantly amassed a new fleet, placed at its head the patrician Mavros[652] the Bessian[653] and entrusted him with siege engines — rams,

650. Custom of the Turkomongolic tribes. The killing was meant as a sacrifice in honour of the dead person so that she or he would not be alone on their last journey. Dunlop, *op.cit.*, p.175 and note 20. —Head, *The Second Reign.*

651. Theophanes, p.379. —Nicephorus, p.46. —Zonaras, III, 329. Bury writes: "her Ethiopian cook".

652. Could it be the same Mavros, the patrician, about whom I wrote in Vol. IV, Chapter IV, section I, and who had been exiled in Thrace? However, his age may not allow this hypothesis unless this is his son who was made patrician as a reward for betraying his father's conspiracy. My impression that it might be one of the two comes from the fact that Theophanes writes "the Bessian".

653. According to the *Strategicon* of Kekaumenos, *Strategicon,* ed. Wassiliewsky, (Amsterdam 1965) p.74, the so-called Dakae and Bessoi originally dwelt near the Danube. They pretended to be loyal to the kings of the

arbalests and wooden towers.[654] Express orders were given to Mavros to raze everything to the ground and spare no one (Nicephorus: "and all who were in the city to kill unsparingly"). Here, I should like to point out that both Theophanes and Nicephorus, only a few lines back, stated that all the citizens were killed except the infants. Who was left, therefore, to defend the city and whom were the Byzantine soldiers supposed to kill?

Mavros was also commanded to report frequently to Justinian. The Byzantines arrived at Cherson and began the siege. With the help of the military engines they managed first to conquer the "Kendinarisius tower" and afterwards the one close to it named "Syagron".[655] The city was in danger of falling when the Khazars arrived with reinforcements (hence not very many Khazars were in the city and it was not the Khazars who were under siege). As a matter of fact, Nicephorus writes that the city was saved because suddenly a host of Khazars fell upon the besiegers. Of necessity a truce of some kind was drawn up and hostilities ceased. Bardanis escaped and sought refuge with the Khagan of the Khazars.

Romans, but they did not hesitate to pillage their lands. They later spread over Macedonia and Epirus. Further on he writes that they were not to be trusted because they were hypocritical in their love and faith. Mavros came with Kouver from this region and the *Miracula of St. Demetrius* (*Migne P.G.*, Vol. 116) characterises him with exactly the same words. This cannot be mere coincidence. See also Chrysanthopoulos E., *The Books of Miracles of St. Demetrius*, Athens, 1954. On page 84 he writes that the Bessoi or Bissoi were a Thracian tribe. Mavros was exiled in Thrace. These concidences lead me to think that it is the same person as Mavros of the *Book of Miracles of St. Demetrius* or his son. Moreover, this Mavros finally betrayed Justinian, as the other one of the Book of Miracles wanted to betray Constantine IV.

654. Military engines, see Vol. I, p.372 ff. 1. The ram was a great pole at the end of which was placed a solid mass of bronze or iron. The ram was hung from a scaffold and was hurled with force against the walls. 2. Ballista, or arbalest, engines which fired stones, arrows or javelins with great force and for a long distance. 3. Wooden towers on wheels higher than the wall under attack on which were placed various engines like rams, arbalests, etc.

655. Minns writes (p.532) that the Russian scholar Ber. de la Garde, who in general questions the veracity of Theophanes' writings, having ascertained the facts agrees about the locality of the castles. There are many inscriptions dating from Justinian's reign which have been published by Kulakovsky and other Russian scholars, but which I was unable to consult.

Mavros and the Byzantines were at a loss. They could neither conquer Cherson, nor arrest Bardanis and feared Justinian's wrath if they returned to Constantinople without having accomplished their mission. In view of this, they renounced Justinian and recognised Bardanis as Emperor.[656] They asked the Khagan to hand over Bardanis who in the meantime had changed his name to Philippikos. The Khagan made them promise that they would not betray Philippikos and also asked for the offer(!) of one coin for every man (Nicephorus writes that he asked for a hundred coins per man). The money was given to the Khagan and Philippikos returned to Cherson as the Emperor recognised by all the Byzantines of the region. Mavros embarked together with his soldiers and departed for Constantinople.[657]

This is how Theophanes and the other Byzantine chroniclers narrate the events concerning the famous expedition to Cherson. The whole account is so confused by phantasy and legend that it becomes unbelievable. Given the fact that the revolution which caused Justinian's dethronement started at Cherson, some truth must be present in these accounts and this truth has to be reconstructed. I would like to raise some points before proceeding to any conclusions:

1. What was the reason behind this expedition against Cherson? All the chroniclers agree that it was undertaken because Justinian wished to revenge himself upon the inhabitants who had been slanderous and wished to turn him over to Apsimarus-Tiberius[658] when he had been an exile in their

656. Mavros' action was pure treason. Bearing in mind Kekaumenos' statement about the Bessoi and the Book of Miracles, I think that this person is one and the same as the Mavros whom Kouver sent to conquer Salonica or his son. This, of course, happened 30 years earlier.

657. Theophanes, pp.379-380. —Nicephorus, pp.46-7. —Cedrenus, p.783. —Zonaras, III, 329. —Sathas, *Synopsis*, pp.118-9. —Sicardi, *Chronicon*, p.573.

658. Nicephorus, p.44 "remembering the slanders which the Chersonites had communicated to Apsimarus about his person..." Cedrenus, p.782, writes approximately the same but adds "the slanders of the Chersonites, the Bosporians and others".

land. Most contemporary historians accept this explanation and agree that the expedition was for motives of revenge.[659] However, the question arises as to why Justinian waited for so many years before seeking revenge for at least five or six years had passed since he had regained his throne.

2. If it was simply a question of revenge why did Justinian send such a large army and fleet? Irrespective of the fact that the number of 100,000 men is exaggerated, how many ships were required for such a long voyage? One would think at least 2,000 to 3,000 large transport ships, given the fact that, as I have repeatedly written, for Belissarius to transport 15,000 men he used over 500 ships.[660] Was it possible that such a large number was available? Cherson was a small city. Why such an exorbitant number of soldiers?

3. The chroniclers state that the army was sent against Cherson, Bosporus[661] "and the people of other principalities..." In no part of the texts do we find any explanation about these other principalities.[662] However, why against Bosporus? Justinian never went to this city during his exile, hence his "wrath" against its citizens is inexplicable.

4. According to the chroniclers Justinian sent not only his regular army but also part of the militia: "and also from the agrarian (I suppose the theme of Thrace) and the humbler crafts and the representatives of the Senate and the Deme of the city..." The militia was entrusted with the defence of Constantinople in the case of attack. Why did Justinian decide to

659. Ostrogorsky, *op.cit.*, p.144. —Bréhier, *Vie et Mort*, p.70 ff. —Amandos, I, 340. —Paparrigopoulos, III, 412. —Lebeau, *op.cit.*, Vol. XII. —Diehl, *op.cit.*, p.245 ff.— Bury, II, 362 ff. Bury adds that Justinian had a mania against the Chersonites.

660. Procopius, *Bellum Vandalicum*, I, 11, ed. Haury, Leipzig.

661. Ancient town of the Crimea on the west side of the Kerts canal. The Khazars with the help of the Utigurs had tried to conquer the town but finally did not succeed. In 590, during the reign of Mauricius, the gates and castles were repaired. See Minns, *op.cit.*, p.532. —Dunlop, *op.cit.*, p.37 ff.

662. Nicephorus, p.44.

send part of it on such a distant expedition? Only one explanation seems feasible: Justinian sent a large number from the Deme of the Blues which was hostile to him. This is supported by the phrase "representatives of the Senate". The aristocracy, many members of which Justinian killed when he regained the throne, was against him.

5. The orders given were that all the citizens be killed and the city razed to the ground. In spite of this, together with the army he sent the spatharius Elias who was surposed to settle in Cherson as its ruler. Ruler over what? A ruined, waste region?

6. Why do the chroniclers say that Stephanos conquered the forts without encountering any resistance? Who would resist, since the Chersonites were Byzantine people? Why should they resist if they did not know what was awaiting them? And if they did know, why did they not fight? I repeat that the chroniclers write all the Chersonites had been exterminated.

7. Why did the nobles of Cherson receive such different treatment? Forty-one were arrested and sent to Justinian who did not harm them, whilst 27 were burnt at the stake and drowned. The only reasonable explanation seems to me to be that those 27 were personal enemies of Justinian and the other 41 simply notables of the city.

8. What is all this matter about the "Tudun"? How was it that a Khazar ruled in a Byzantine city as provincial governor? Could it be that being related to Justinian and because of Justinian's desire for revenge and the wars in which he was engaged with the Arabs, the Lazs, etc., the Khazars took advantage and began to intrude into Byzantine territory? If this was so then the expedition seems justifiable, especially as Bosporus and other "principalities" are mentioned. One gathers that some such intrusion must have occurred from the words of the chroniclers. Theophanes writes: "The Tudun, ruler of Cherson and representative of the Khagan". Nicephorus says the same. Hence, the ruler was not a Byzantine but a Khazar.

9. The statement that Justinian was furious because Stephanos "spared the infants" is extraordinary. What is even more curious is that we are told that Justinian was angered against Stephanos because "he was inclined to philanthropy

more than expected".[663] However, why did Justinian order the entire army and fleet to return and not just Stephanos? Such an order would imply that the army had fulfilled its mission, i.e., Cherson had been conquered and was once more under Byzantine rule.

10. What is all this matter about Bardanis-Philippikos? Was he sent to Cherson as an exile or as an officer? Theophanes[664] says that Bardanis had a dream where an eagle came and nestled on his head. This symbolised his crowning as Emperor. Tiberius-Apsimarus had exiled him to Cephalonia. Bardanis was the son of a renowned family which came from Armenia. His father was the patrician Nicephorus who was most probably the patrician and general sent by Constantine IV in 667 to repress the mutiny of Savorius, general of the Armeniakon theme.[665] In 571, because of the Persian persecutions, many Armenians under the leadership of Bardanis Mamikonian escaped into Asia Minor and formed a great colony in Pergamos. Bardanis came from there.[666] However, the sources give contradictory information, for some say he was an officer, others an exile and others the leader of an army on a new expedition. The only source contemporary with the events, the letter of Agathon, archivist of St. Sophia, to Pope Constantine,[667] written in 713-14, mentions Bardanis as "exiled there", i.e., in Cherson. The question is why did Justinian recall him from Cephalonia and send him to Cherson. On the contrary, Theophanes writes: "who was recalled from Cephalonia and with the fleet went to Cherson" and two pages later[668] confirms the information that Bardanis was recalled from exile by Justinian. Nicephorus, on the other hand, writes: "he left there as an exile".[569] Other

663. Nicephorus, p.45. —Lebeau, *op.cit.*, Vol. XII, 75, maintains that Stephanos let many of the inhabitants of Cherson escape. No source confirms this but it is a likely conclusion from Nicephorus' account.

664. Theophanes, p.372. —The same almost is written by Zonaras, III, 326, Sathas, *Synopsis*, p.116 and Leo the Grammarian, p.167.

665. Theophanes, p.350. —Stratos, *op.cit.*, Vol. IV, p.238 and 246.

666. Mansi, XII, 192, "from Pergamos by descent."

667. Mansi, XII, 192-208.

668. Theophanes, p.381.

669. Nicephorus, p.48. —George the Monk, p.733, writes the same.

chroniclers maintain that Justinian sent another fleet with Bardanis at its head.[670]

11. What are we to make of the story about the mission of nobles from Constantinople with 300 soldiers, the Tudun and Zoilus, and orders to restore order in Cherson and offer apologies through an embassy to the Khagan of the Khazars? To be sure, this points to a change in policy on the part of Justinian. However, is it possible to believe that he decided to hand over Cherson and the Byzantine possessions to the Khazars? Irrespective of the fact that he wished to suppress the uprising, why was a Khazar governor re-appointed in this area?

12. All the chroniclers write that the expedition was directed against Cherson, Bosporus and other principalities yet they only mention Cherson and fail to say anything about the other places.

These are the points I wished to raise about this very curious affair. Undoubtedly the whole story is interwoven with fantasies which prevent one from finding the truth. To come to any conclusions would be risky, but we can adduce some hypotheses which will provide some explanation of the events so strangely narrated.

Theophanes and Nicephorus based their writings on a common source and therefore often use the same words. This source has been lost but is often referred to as the "713 Chronicon".[671] This Chronicon was probably written in those days and the events which it mentions must in some way or other have happened. However, as it was written during the years when Bardanis-Philippikos was king, one may reasonably assume that the exaggerations and fantasies were added to it in order to justify Bardanis' revolt. Consequently, we may accept many of the events, but reject most of the reasons provided as explanations for them by this chronicle which, I believe, is not free from an element of propaganda.

That there were expeditions against Cherson is an undeniable

670. Sathas, *Synopsis*, p.118. —Glykas, p.521. —Manasses, 4025 ff.

671. The copy of a chronicle has survived which ends with the year 713 and for this reason has been entitled "713 Chronicon". The copy dates from the 9th century. See Orosz, *The London Manuscript of Nikephoros Breviarium*, (Budapest, 1948).

fact. As I mentioned, there is a source contemporary with the events which expressly refers to them. This is the letter of the archivist of St. Sophia, Agathon, who had transcribed the minutes of the 6th Ecumenical Synod destroyed by order of Bardanis-Philippikos, though one copy survived in the Patriarchate. This letter, written in 713, states: "a great army was sent several times by sea for the purpose of destroying and conquering Cherson and putting to the sword all its inhabitants..." On the basis of this source we may agree that only two expeditions occurred (and not three or four as some maintain) and these only against Cherson.

What were the reasons behind these expeditions? I presume, for we can only conjecture, that the inhabitants of Cherson feared Justinian's retaliation because, as I wrote in Chapter IX, some had behaved very badly towards him: they were ready to arrest and hand him over to Apsimarus-Tiberius. After the incidents at Ravenna (and who knows how the news reached them) and in particular after the arrival of the Archbishop of Ravenna, Felix, who had been exiled there, the citizens of Cherson were overcome by anxiety. The Khagan of the Khazars probably reasoned that with the wars against the Arabs and the negotiations with the Western Church, Justinian must have been too busy to turn his attention to the Crimea. The fact that they were also related may have played some part in the decision taken by the Khagan to take advantage of the situation and bring under his control the Byzantine possessions in that area. Having come to an agreement with the nobles of the city, he appointed a local governor (Tudun) in Cherson. As we saw in Chapter IX, the Khagan also had a representative in Bosporus, hence he had already begun to realise his plans. Justinian, who feared that the Crimea was in danger of being lost to the Byzantines and perhaps because he also wished to revenge himself upon those who had betrayed him, sent an army (though surely not of 100,000 men which he could never have gathered), and a fleet to re-establish Byzantine control in the area. Surely, he did not order that all the inhabitants be killed. This is proved by the fact that he appointed a governor for the region. The Byzantines entered Cherson without encountering any resistance probably

because with the exception of a few nobles the people did not wish to be subjugated to the Khazars and because the Khazars, apart from the governor and a small garrison, had not sent any considerable forces there.

Stephanos executed the orders which he had recieved, i.e., killed Justinian's personal enemies, arrested Zoilus, the first of the citizens, and 40 other notables, who may have been suspected of collaborating with the Khazars, as well as the Tudun. These were sent as captives to Justinian.

I cannot find an explanation as to what intervened to make Justinian decide to send back the Tudun and the nobles. Perhaps he was convinced that these nobles were innocent and were not involved in the plot against him. As for the Tudun, Justinian may not have wished to make an immediate break in relations with the Khazars. At all events, the fact that the Byzantine soldiers were sent to the Khagan by the citizens of Cherson and the spatharius Elias and did not stay in the city proves that the region was once again under Byzantine control. Years hence, the entire area was to be organized as a theme.[672] What seems to me inexplicable is why Elias and the citizens revolted and killed the leaders of the mission. The fact that there were still citizens in Cherson[673] proves the statements of the chroniclers about a general massacre are wrong. We must therefore treat their statements with great care.

Once the representatives of Justinian had been killed and the Khazars had massacred the Byzantine officers and soldiers, the only remaining solution was a mutiny against Justinian. Bardanis was elected Emperor, receiving the name Philippikos. As written previously, he came from a distinguished family and his father was a famous general. It is possible that they elected him Emperor hoping that his family past would appeal to army officers and draw them on his side. I presume that when Justinian was informed of the mutiny anger and fear of

672. Constantine Porphyrogennetus, *De them*, and the notes and scholia of A. Pertusi on the text.

673. Both Nicephorus (p.45) and Zonaras (III, 329) write about "the survivors".

dethronement must have possessed him. He therefore hastened to gather an army and a fleet (hence the fleet had not been destroyed by the storm, nor the army drowned). Justinian constructed many siege engines (rams, arbalests, etc.) and appointed the patrician Mavros leader of the expedition. Justinian was well aware that there would be many difficulties in this attempt to recapture Cherson. However, the expedition had to take place because discontent with his bad administration was mounting and there was danger of the revolution spreading.

The Chersonites, upon hearing of Justinian's preparations, hastened to form an alliance with the Khazars yet without agreeing to have a military garrison in their city. Mavros managed to overcome the resistance put up by the citizens and to conquer two forts. The city was in danger of falling when the Khazars arrived with forces greater than those of the Byzantines and obliged them to stop the siege. Philippikos hastened to escape to the Khazars, for, in spite of the appearance of the Khazar army, he still did not feel safe in Cherson. Philippikos' act gave the Khagan the opportunity to get remuneration for the help given to the mutineers.

Mavros and his army were at a loss as to what to do after their failure to recapture Cherson. They were afraid to go back to Constantinople because they had been defeated and had not succeeded in their mission. We should not forget that Mavros came from "Bessoi", whose citizens were not famous for their loyalty. It is possible that the army was discontented with Justinian. Hence they came to the decision to renounce Justinian and to acclaim Philippikos. Mavros and his army, as well as Elias and his troops, boarded the ships and sailed for Constantinople with the purpose of dethroning Justinian.

What is left is the question of dating these episodes. Theophanes gives the date 6203=711, 6th year of Justinian's reign =710-711. It is reasonable to accept the year 711. Also the month of October is mentioned by both Theophanes and Nicephorus. Given the fact that this affair resulted in the deposition of Justinian sometime in November or December of 711, we may agree that indeed the Cherson episode occurred in 711.

This, I believe, is the background against which the Cherson episode must be placed. Some historians refuse to accept this expedition as ever having happened.[674] I must confess that I myself had many reservations at first. However, the letter of the archivist Agathon convinced me that there were two expeditions. Moreover, it was from Cherson that the revolution which caused Justinian's dethronement originated. I do not, of course, accept the exaggerations encountered in the chroniclers and I believe that the "Chronicon 713" is a work of propaganda written to justify Philippikos and those who assisted him in his revolt.

674. Kulakovsky, *op.cit.*, Vol. III. Brooks accepts it in principle but feels that there must be another source which, if discovered, will yield the truth. Head has expressed reservations. Though she does not reject the possibility of this campaign she refuses to accept the exaggerations.

CHAPTER XIV

THE END OF THE HERACLEIDS

I have already discussed how the entire army at Cherson renounced Justinian and proclaimed Bardanis, re-named Philippikos, as Emperor. The proclamation did not follow the legal procedure for the election of Emperors.[675] The chronicles say that the army "hailed him as king"[676] and Leo the Grammarian adds (p.169) that "Philippikos-Bardanis undermined the loyalty of some soldiers to Justinian and drew them to his side by stressing the Emperor's brutality and bloodthirstiness. Thus, they acclaimed him king". Another source informs us that he was proclaimed without legal procedure and without an election.[677] When Philippikos was recognised as king the army and navy sailed to conquer Constantinople and depose Justinian. Bardanis-Philippikos had been assisted by the Khagan of the Khazars in spite of the fact that the latter was related to Justinian. Perhaps he hoped that by helping to set the Byzantines against each other his plans for annexing the Byzantine region of the Crimea would succeed. His plans did not materialise.

Justinian had commanded the patrician Mavros to report regularly on the developments of the expedition to Cherson. He received no news and therefore began to worry. Being a suspicious man he feared that something was brewing against him,[678] therefore he took steps to forestall it. He sent a delegate to his friend the king of the Bulgars, Tervel, (this proves that Theophanes is wrong when he writes that two years before

675. Stratos, *op.cit.*, Vol. I, 49ff. —Christophilopoulou, *Election, Proclamation and Coronation*, (Athens, 1956).

676. Nicephorus, p.46. —Theophanes, p.379. —George the Monk writes "proclaimed".

677. Epistle of Agathon in Mansi, XII, 192 ff, "and in a great hurry on the spot and without any legal preparations or election he was proclaimed king."

678. Nicephorus, p.47. —Theophanes, p.380. —Zonaras, III, 329.

Justinian was at war with the Bulgars) requesting assistance. Tervel sent him 3,000 men as reinforcements.[679] Meanwhile, news of the army's mutiny reached Constantinople.[680]

Nowhere is it mentioned, and I myself cannot surmise, why Justinian left Constantinople and went to Asia Minor. Perhaps the explanation is simple and has to do with the fact that he was afraid of the people of Constantinople whose discontent had increased because of the continuous executions and his military failures which had had an effect on the country's economy. The Senate and generally the aristocracy of the land were against him. The Blues despised him and the Greens were dissatisfied with the situation. Consequently, Justinian could not trust the militia for the defence of Constantinople because he needed to have a considerable army to confront the mutineers and to control the people at the same time. There was another possibility, namely that Bardanis, who was an Armenian, might go to Byzantine Armenia to seek reinforcements[681] from the Armeniakon theme where his family possibly still had great influence. At any rate, Justinian together with a section of the army of the theme of Thrace, Tervel's Bulgar soldiers and perhaps part of his guard, crossed to Asia Minor and camped in the valley of Damatrys,[682] where there was also an imperial

679. Nicephorus, p.47. —Brooks, in *C.M.H.* II, 413. —Bury, *op.cit.*, II, 365. —Runciman, *History*, p.32.

680. George the Monk, p.733. —Leo the Grammarian, p.169.

681. Head, *The Second Reign*, wrongly maintains that during the same period a revolt broke out against the Byzantines in Armenia which the Arabs had incited. She quotes Ghevond, p.341, but nothing of the sort can be deduced from his chronicle. It is possible that Head was misled by the revolt instigated by Smbad Bagratuni. This affair, however, has no connection with Byzantine Armenia. Breckenridge in *Numismatic*, p.16, expresses a similar view which he bases on the anathema pronounced by the Patriarch on Smbad and the Armenians who had pillaged the churches of Phasis. See Chapter XII, section 3. These escaped to what was before Persian Armenia which was later occupied by the Arabs.

682. Damatrys, today's Samandra. Many Byzantine ruins are to be found there. See Janin, *Constantinople*, p.451. —Ramsay, *Historical Geography*, pp.20, 218, 312.

palace.[683] He then ordered the army of the Opsikion theme to assemble under the leadership of the patrician Varisvakurius.[684] I presume that in this familiar environment where he was surrounded by friends Justinian must have felt more secure, but his impatience to have news led him to go together with some of the nobles(?) and part of the army of Thrace and of Opsikion to Sinope (Theophanes), or to the seaside village of Gigilissos (Nicephorus) where he stayed for some time. From there he saw the fleet which was coming from Cherson sailing in the direction of Bosporus[685] and hence to Constantinople. Justinian decided to return to Constantinople, or as Theophanes, whose writing is characterised by fantasy and exaggeration, states "roaring like a lion he also rushed in the direction of the city".

683. Nicephorus, p.47.

684. One of Justinian's friends who joined him at Cherson before Justinian crossed the Black Sea. This person has given rise to a serious argument. Theophanes calls him "Protopatrician". Yannopoulos in *Studies on Byzantine Personalities* states that this title is not to be found in the "Notitia Dignitatum". Bury, *The Imperial Administrative System* (London, 1911) p.28, writes that the title perhaps refers to the elder of "the holy class of upright patricians". Yannopoulos does not accept this view because in a seal published by Schlumberger in *Bulles Byzantines,* the inscription simply reads "patrician and count of the Opsikion". It is possible that this view is correct, although the publisher of this seal was not sure whether it belonged to this very same Varasvakurius, or to some one with a similar name who lived in the years of Romanos Argyris (1031). However, I would like to point out that in C. Porphyrogennetus, *De Cer.* Chapter 34, the order of official presentantions was: *Secondly, patricians and vice-consuls, thirdly, patricians and generals, fourthly, simple vice-consuls of the themes.* Vogt in *Commentaires* (Paris, 1935), Vol. I, p.92, writes that the title vice-consul and patrician was the greatest title after that of magister. It was usually given to members of the royal family of the high nobility. The number was very restricted. Given the fact that immediately after came the class of "patricians and generals" i.e., of the leaders of the army, I wonder whether the title of "protopatrician" is not the same as that of "vice-consul and patrician". It is possible that the seal discovered had been made before the title was given to Varasvakurius who was until then simply "patrician and count". At any rate, Varasvakurius was a close friend of Justinian's and it seems he was immediately appointed general of the Opsikion theme which covered Constantinople.

685. Nicephorus, p.47. —Theophanes, p.380. —Zonaras, III, 329. —George the Monk, p.733. —Sathas, *Synopsis,* p.119.

However, Philippikos arrived in Constantinople before Justinian. The city surrendered without any resistance and received him as their king. Philippikos immediately thought of dispatching forces to arrest Justinian and his followers. He commanded the spatharius Elias to cross over to Asia Minor with an army. Another division, we know not under whose orders, went to arrest Justinian's followers. Finally, Mavros the patrician and the spatharius John Strouthos together with a small force were ordered to find Tiberius and kill him.

There is a question which cannot be answered given the present state of the sources which say that as soon as Justinian saw the fleet sailing in the direction of Constantinople "he rushed there too". I wonder, though, how could he have seen the fleet from Sinope or the surrounding region and guessed its direction. This could only have been a guess on his part. Other sources state that Justinian went directly to the camp of Damatrys. If we accept the first version then it is natural to wonder why he took his army away from Constantinople and left the city unguarded since he wished to arrive there first and prevent the mutineers from entering it. I, therefore, tend to believe that the second version is closer to fact and that Justinian settled at Damatrys amidst his army and Bulgar allies.

Elias arrived at the camp and began negotiations with the Byzantine army which was there. He assured them on oath that no one would be harmed and perhaps promised some reward. To the Bulgars he promised that they would be allowed to return to their country unharmed. It appears that everyone had realised who was winning the game and began to abandon Justinian. Even his closest friend Variskvakurius tried to save himself by fleeing.[686] Finally, Justinian was forsaken by all and he remained alone. Then Elias, who could never forget the murder of his children and the ravishment of his wife, fell upon the palace, in fury caught Justinian by the throat and with his sword

686. Theophanes, p.380.

"beheaded him".[687] Elias had the spatharius Romanus carry Justinian's head to Philippikos. He, in turn, sent the head to Rome and Ravenna.[688] According to one source Justinian's body was thrown into the sea. However, this information seems to be incorrect as none of the well-known sources mention it. Nicephorus and Theophanes write simply that Justinian was beheaded. It is not mentioned where he was buried. One thing certain is that he was not buried in the royal tombs at the Church of Holy Apostles.

Another question in need of an answer is when was Justinian killed. Unfortunately, no source mentions the date and though we know the year we do not know the day. Until now it has been thought that the execution took place in December 711.[689] Grierson does not accept this. On the basis of the chronicle *Altinate and Grandese,* which he admits is full of errors, he dates his death on the 24th of December 711. But he questions this date as well because the manuscript of Constantine Porphyrogennetus discovered in the Patriarchate[690] states "...in the month of November ended the days of Justinian whose nose had been mutilated..." Grierson and Head therefore accept this date. The only source which gives an indication of a date is the *Liber Pontificatis* (p. 91) which states that news of Justinian's death reached Rome three months after the arrival of Pope Constantine in Rome on the 24th of October 711.

687. Nicephorus, p.47. —Theophanes, p.380-1. —Cedrenus, p.781. —George the Monk, p.733. —Zonaras, III, 329. —Leo the Grammarian, p.169. Paul the Deacon, VI, 32b, maintains that Justinian was arrested at the 12th milliarion from Constantinople. However, Damatrys is at a much greater distance and hence Paul comes into contradiction with all the other sources including the Chronicon Cumont who write that he was arrested and beheaded at Damatrys. Moreover, this last source states "in the palace of Damatrys".

688. Theophanes, p.381. —About Ravenna, Agnelli (section 142) writes that "all rejoiced when Justinian's head was carried around". In contrast, Leo the Grammarian (p.169) writes that his head was sent to the "Scyths". I presume he means the Khazars.

689. Dölger, *Regesten,* pp.33-34. —Grumel, *La Chronologie,* p.357. —Bréhier, *Vie et Mort,* p.71.

690. Mango C.-Sevcenko I., Additional note on the "Tombs and Obits" in *D.O.P,* Vol. 16/1962, p.62.

Consequently, if the news arrived towards the end of January 711, the murder must have occurred at the end of November or the beginning of December,[691] if one takes into account the distance and difficulties of travel by sea during those months. At all events, he was mourned in Rome because his religious policy had endeared him to the Romans. On the contrary, Ravenna celebrated the event. Justinian was 43 years old when he was killed.

Those sent to deal with the friends of Justinian arrested Varisvakurius and the other nobles[692] and killed them instantly.

The patrician Mavros together with John "surnamed Strouthos" went to the Church of the Virgin of Blachernae where Tiberius and his grandmother Empress Anastasia, wife of Constantine IV and mother of Justinian, had found refuge. Nothing is known about Justinian's wife. It is possible that she had already died.[693] However, if she had died before Justinian was deposed or killed, why was she not buried in the Church of the Holy Apostles as befitted a queen?

I am obliged to narrate the manner in which Justinian's son Tiberius was killed, though the affair arouses one's horror and presents the Byzantines in a very unfavourable light, irrespective of the fact that perhaps in the West more atrocious acts were committed.

Little Tiberius was next to the altar in the Church of Blachernae. With one hand he was holding a small column which was supporting the altar, and in the other he was holding "the holy wooden relics". I presume this was a piece of the Holy Cross or a small box in which were said to be fragments of it. Around his neck hung various "amulets". In those days even the educated part of the population believed in the miraculous powers of relics.[694] His grandmother was in the forecourt of the

691. Ostrogorsky, *Die Chronologie des Theophanes*, p.33.

692. Nicephorus, 48. —Theophanes, p.380.

693. Zonaras, III, 330, who writes that she had died a while ago. —Sathas, *Synopsis*, p.119. —Bury, *op.cit.*, II, 51.

694. Magoulias, H.J., *The Lives of Byzantine Saints*, in BYZ, XXXVII/1967 and in particular p.251. The author states that during these centuries the

church when she saw Mavros arriving. She fell before his feet and in tears begged him to spare her grandson who was only six years old and had done no harm to anyone. She was still holding his feet and pleading when John Strouthos entered the church, snatched the child from the altar, took off his amulets which he put around his own neck as if for his personal protection[695] and, finally, together with Mavros carried the child "to the upper gate of Kallinikes..."[696] Having undressed him, they then killed the child, or as Nicephorus writes "like a horse they killed the child with a knife" and as Theophanes writes "they slit his throat as if he was a lamb".[697] Mavros ordered that the child be buried "in the Holy of Holies of the Church of the Saints Anargyroi of Pavlines."[698]

With the death of Tiberius the line of the Heracleids which offered so much to Byzantium came to an end.

Bardanis-Philippikos, who had just been proclaimed Emperor by the army, deposed the Patriarch Cyrus and in his

Byzantines had an extraordinary faith in the protection which these amulets and relics of the Saints could give. They believed that by possessing them they were immune to all dangers.

695. I do not know whether at that time this church had the right of asylum. It is possible because of its great fame. However, it is not the first time that a person seeking asylum there was seized and put to death. This happened in 563 by order of Justinian I (Theophanes, p.238).

696. Kallinikes. The small gate of Kallinikes was in the walls near the Church of Blachernae on the road to Kosmidion. Nicephorus writes (p.48) "the one which is situated on the higher wall, the so-called of the Kallinices". Janin, *Constantinople*, p.268. —Mordtmann, *Esquisse*, sec. 60. This gate led to the bridge of Justinian, or bridge of St. Kallinikes, hence it was situated at the north part of the city at the distant point of the Golden Horn (Janin, *Les Ponts Byzantins de la Corne d'Or*, pp.247-250).

697. Nicephorus, p.48. —Theophanes, p.380. —Cedrenus, pp.783-4. —Zonaras, III. 330. —Sathas, *Synopsis*, p.119. —*Chronicon* Cumont 31.

698. Pavlines. According to *S.O.C.* p.261, within the area of the Church of St. Anargyroi, Pavlinos, magister and friend of Theodosius, built a monastery which took his name. According to Janin, *Eglises et Monastères*, p.296 ff., the Church of Sts. Cosmas and Damian, i.e., of the Sts. Anargyroi, was built as the *S.O.C.* describe and within its area was the monastery of Pavlines. The monastery does not exist today and is said to have stood on the west side of Eyub. Vyzantios, pp.606-10, tells the whole story.

place appointed John, deacon and archivist of the Bursary, who instantly crowned him Emperor.[699] Tervel found occasion to enter Thrace with his army with the excuse that he wished to revenge Justinian's death. The Bulgars pillaged the land,[700] but finally departed carrying with them large quantities of booty.

699. *Chronicon Cumont*, 31. —Theophanes, p.381.
700. Nicephorus, p.48. —Theophanes, p.382. —Amandos, I, 341. —Kulakovsky, *op.cit.*

EPILOGUE

Many will be concerned with the question as to whether the reign of the Heracleids was good for Byzantium. Yet before attempting an answer one should take into account the situation of Byzantium before the first of the line assumed the throne. The dangers presented by the Persians and other barbaric hordes from the North were enormous. A much more important factor was the psychological state of the Byzantines, for their treasury was empty, their administration corrupt, their Church divided by feuds, their army in a wretched condition. Above all there was the deep-rooted hatred felt by the Eastern Provinces against the West and against the Greek-Roman civilisation which had nurtured them for so many centuries. These were the problems which the first of the Heracleids had to face and resolve.

Heraclius I was a good ruler. He was a brave soldier, a good fighter who finally succeeded in overcoming the Persians and regaining the Byzantine provinces. His strategical miscalculations prolonged the state of war so that when peace was established Byzantium was faced with financial collapse. The appearance of the Arabs and their final great sally, which was assisted by the indigenous peoples, came at a moment when Heraclius was old, tired and unable to realise and face the magnitude of the danger. This time the Church did not offer him economic support as it had done when the Empire was threatened by the Persians. All the Eastern Provinces, where so much blood had been spilt, were lost forever.

Constantine II and Heraclius II (Heracleonas) who succeeded him reigned for a short times, the first barely four months, the second, who was then 16 years old, for a period of less than 11 months. Constantine III (Constans) assumed the throne when he was only 11 years old. He proved to be a brave soldier and fighter. Although he detested ecclesiastical feuds, church factions tried to involve him in their disputes. He succeeded in curtailing the tremendous aggressiveness of the

Arabs and of the peoples who had espoused Islam. He managed to restore order in the Balkans, but committed the same error as Justinian I: he attempted to regain Italy without having the forces necessary for such an undertaking. His personality was dynamic and he ruled with an absolutism characteristic of a Roman Emperor. Though he offered many services to Byzantium, history has marked him as a cruel ruler.

Constantine IV was a good, unwarlike king. He successfully resisted the Arabs, but allowed the Bulgar hordes to cross the Danube and settle in the Balkans. This was to have tremendous consequences for Byzantium.

Finally, Justinian II, a man of many merits but no sense of proportion, helped maintain peace in the European regions and fostered the country's economy. Unfortunately, his exile and mutilation transformed him into a cruel despot and his impetuous character led him to commit errors which caused his death and that of his dynasty. His death was followed by six years of anarchy.

The dynasty of the Heracleids offered great services to the state. It introduced fundamental reforms in the social, administrative and financial areas which revitalised the Empire and enabled it to survive the dangers besetting it.

The new administrative structure which introduced the institution of "themes" in the reign of Heraclius I and which continued to develop under his successors enabled the state to acquire an almost permanent army, easily mobilised in regions threatened by the enemy. This costly system was not applied immediately in all Byzantine areas but took a long time to be realised. It was usually extended to regions which were faced with immediate danger and provided the opportunity for the concession of land with the relevant military obligations. This system favoured small landowners and the cultivation of more farms on a free economy basis because these yielded a greater tax return and constituted fundamental factors in the strength of the Empire. The colonisation of areas which had been devastated by the invasions of the barbarians was another factor of economic development. The mass settlement of refugees from regions which had been occupied by the Arabs or the Bulgars,

although they contained the most disparate ethnic groups, nevertheless increased the working force and thus helped to strengthen the economic power of Byzantium.

The Heracleids were also responsible for the development of commerce in Byzantium. When the Empire lost the Eastern Provinces it was deprived not only of its main source of grain, which supplied the needs of Constantinople, but also of the industries and the workshops founded in those provinces during the previous centuries, which constituted a great source of income for the state. This necessitated an increase in the agricultural production of Thrace and Asia Minor and the extension or creation of workshops for silk finishing and luxurious garments. However, the fact that Byzantium had been cut off from almost all import routes for raw materials created great difficulties, for its production had not reached the level of demand. It is perhaps for this reason that every effort was made not to lose the Crimea, because from Cherson, bypassing the Caspian Sea from the north, the caravans could link up with Asia and thus transport to Byzantium the raw materials needed.

The import routes for gold were closed to the Byzantines. Armenina, whose rivers supplied sufficient quantities of gold for the economy of the Empire, had been lost. Yet the dynasty of the Heracleids succeeded in keeping the currency stable even though gold reserves had greatly diminished.

Unfortunately, frequent wars, invasions and insurrections caused a decline in the spiritual life of the Empire during this otherwise most important century in contrast to the flowering witnessed in the previous one. Heraclius reorganised the University of Constantinople and supported the School of Athens. However, the famous philosopher Tychikos from Trepizond refused the rectorship offered to him by this school.

Meantime, the Eastern Provinces of the Roman Empire continued to be Hellenised. As I have already written, Byzantium was never a homogeneous state. The idea of a nation as conceived in our days was unknown to the Byzantines. When the Eastern Provinces were lost, Byzantium was restricted to the Greek speaking regions where Greek learning and culture had not only spread but imposed itself as well. The laws were written

in Greek, the Church used the Greek language and so did the army. Since education was provided in Greek it was natural for the Hellenising process to follow at a swift rate. I should like to repeat that our contemporary notion of a nation is irrelevant here. In those days no country had a homogeneous population so when Byzantium was founded it was not different in this respect from Persia, the Arab Empire or the Bulgar State. However, the peoples who stayed within the Byzantine dominion, with the exception of central and north Italy, though for many decades they kept their original traits, were for the most part assimilated into the linguistic and cultural climate of Byzantium.

As the century closes and the dynasty of the Heracleids comes to an end the borders of the Byzantine Empire can be more or less designated as follows: in Asia Minor from the river Pyramus, west of Mopsuesta, of Theodosioupolis and east of the province of Pontus up to Lazika, which was again under Byzantine influence; in the Balkans, from the Black Sea north of Anchialos and Mesembria, along the mountains of Hemus up to the Danube approximately to Belgrade and Dalmatia which belonged to Byzantium; in Africa only Septem (Ceuta) remained; in Italy, the Exarchate of Ravenna remained Byzantine, though its borders had strunk, while Venice and south Italy together with Sicily had been greatly Hellenised.

The dynasty of the Heracleids produced both strong and weak kings. However, the strong were not altogether free of weaknesses. Irrespective of the losses suffered, Byzantium under the Heracleids was inspired with a vital, creative urge. Thanks to the reforms introduced the Empire was able to stand alone against its enemies until it was overcome by the barbarians of the West. As Ostrogorsky rightly observes, with Heraclius the Roman state ends and the Greek Byzantine state begins.

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BYZ. — Byzantion, Brussels.
BZ. — Byzantinische Zeitschrift, Munich.
C.E.H. — Cambridge Economic History, Cambridge.
C.M.H. — Cambridge Medieval History, Cambridge.
Constantine Porphyrogennetus
De Cer. — De Ceremoniis.
De Adm. — De Administrando Imperio.
De Them. — De Thematibus.
C.S.C.O. — Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium.
D.O.P. — Dumbarton Oaks Papers, Washington.
E.E.B.S. — Annual of the Society of Byzantine Studies, Athens.
E.H.R. — English Historical Review, London.
E.I.o.ed. — Encyclopedie de l'Islam, old edition.
E.I.n.ed. — Encyclopedie de l'Islam, new edition.
E.O. — Echos d'Orient, Paris.
Goeje, B.G.E. — Bibliotheca Geographorum Araborum, Leyden.
Goeje, F.H.A. — Fragmenta Historicorum Araborum, Leyden.
J.A. — Journal Asiatique, Paris.
J.H.S. — Journal of Hellenic Studies, London.
L.P. — Liber Pontificalis, ed. Duchêsne, Paris.
M.G.H. — Monumenta Germaniae Historica.
Migne, P.G. — Patrologiae Cursus Completus, Series Graeca.
Migne, P.L. — Patrologiae Cursus Completus, Series Latina.
P.O. — Patrologia Orientalis, Graffin et Nau.
R.E.B. — Revue des Etudes Byzantines, Paris.
S.O.C. — Sceriptores Originum Constantinopolitarum.
Viz. Vr. — Vizantinski Vremenic, Moscow.

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